



Life Group Discussion Guide
 Blessed are the Pure in Heart
 February 5, 2017

Open in prayer

- When was the last time you felt challenged to do something great?
- What is a goal you set for yourself and achieved?
- What is one thing you would like to have more of in life? (More passion for God? More power in your prayers? More peace in your home? More compassion for other people? More honesty and depth in your relationships?)

Read Matthew 5:3-10

Our verse today is Matthew 5:8 - **Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God.**

The end promise of this beatitude is that we will see God. What effort are we willing expend to see this end?

- What does purity mean to you?
- What would it look like to see God in your life?

The Big Idea: Our hearts influence all our thoughts and actions, so we must protect and nurture them. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, we can resist sin and pursue purity in our actions, words, and thoughts. Purity of heart is not about being perfect, it's about being honest and repentant with God.

- Is it good advice to follow one's heart? Why or why not?
- Why is it necessary to guard our hearts?
- What does it look like for you to guard your heart personally?
- Do you involve other people in the effort to guard your heart? Why might that be important?
 - Jeremiah 17:9**
 - Genesis 6:5**
 - Proverbs 4:23**



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Read Luke 15:11-32

- What is your opinion about the younger son?
- What causes him to come to his senses?
- What was his attitude like when he returns to his father?
- Do you think the father understood what was likely to happen when he gave the younger son his inheritance? Why do you think he did it?
- How does the father treat the son on his return?
- How does the older son feel about the return of his younger brother?
- Do you think the father loves the younger son more? Why or why not?
- Do you think the older brother is justified in his behavior? Why or why not?
- What does the father want for the older son?
- What are the results of the older son's resentment?
- What other options does the older son have?
- Which son do you identify with? Why?

Pastor and author Timothy Keller writes:

"It is not [the elder brother's] sins that create the barrier between him and his father, it's the pride he has in his moral record; it's not his wrongdoing but his righteousness that is keeping him from sharing in the feast of the father...The older son boasts of his obedience to his father, but lets his underlying motivation and attitude slip out when he says, "All these years I've been slaving for you." ...[B]eing faithful to any commitment involves a certain amount of dutifulness. Often we don't feel like doing what we ought to do, but we do it anyway, for the sake of integrity. But the elder brother shows that his obedience to his father is nothing but duty all the way down. There is no joy or love, no reward in just seeing his father pleased....A slave works out of fear—fear of consequences imposed by force. This gets to the root of what drives an elder brother. Ultimately, elder brothers live good lives out of fear, not out of joy and love."¹

Matthew 23:25-28 - "Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You clean the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of greed and self-indulgence. 26 Blind Pharisee! First clean the inside of the cup and dish, and then the outside also will be clean. 27 "Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You are like whitewashed tombs, which look beautiful on the outside but on the inside are full of the bones of the dead and everything unclean. 28 **In the same way, on the outside you appear to people as righteous but on the inside you are full of hypocrisy and wickedness.**

¹ Timothy J. Keller, *The Prodigal God: Recovering the Heart of the Christian Faith*



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- Have you been guilty of this? When have you tried to seem like something different than what you really are?
- How did the older son's attitude affect his view of his father? Sometimes we don't see what God's doing for us because we're too busy being upset about what God's doing for other people.
- Have you ever felt angry or resentful toward God? What caused your view? What changed it? How did the experience affect you?
- What could the older son have done to improve his relationship with his father?

1 John 1:8-9 - If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. 9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

Colossians 3:5 - Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry.

Philippians 4:8 - Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things. (NIV)

The word “confess” in Greek is the word homologeo. Homo means “same,” and logeo means “to speak.” So homologeo literally means “to speak the same about my sin that God does.”²

- How do we pursue purity?
- Why is it not enough to just resist sin?
- How are our hearts made pure?
- What is the initial step we must take towards a pure heart?

Psalms 19:12-13 - But who can discern their own errors? Forgive my hidden faults. Keep your servant also from willful sins.

Psalms 119:9 - How can a young person stay on the path of purity? By living according to your word.

² <http://pastorrick.com/devotional/english/full-post/you-don-t-have-to-be-perfect-just-pure-to-be-used-by-god>