

Blessed are the pure in heart

by Charles Price

This sermon emphasizes the importance of having a pure and single-minded heart before God. It highlights the need for repentance, forgiveness, and the understanding that God's justice, not just His mercy, plays a crucial role in cleansing our hearts. The message focuses on the process of seeing God in all aspects of life, leading to a deeper relationship with Him and a commitment to know Him more.

Scripture: Psalms 103:12, Isaiah 38:17, Isaiah 43:25, Romans 8:1, 1 John 4:17, Psalms 86:11, Ezekiel 11:19, Romans 3:23, Hebrews 4:16

Topics: "Purity of Heart", "Relationship with God"

Description

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Transcript

But I know that some of you will never have cast eyes on him before, so that's him. Charles is the principal at Cape and Ray Bible College, which is, is it actually in Cumbria? It's in South Cumbria. It's actually in North Lancashire.

North Lancashire, South Cumbria, you know. But Charles, you're married to Hilary and you have three children. Just tell us a little bit about what family life for the prices is like.

Well, they get this tape. Well, yes, as you say, I'm married to Hilary, one wife, that's all I've got, all I can afford. And we have three children.

Excuse me, it's all you're allowed. It's all I'm allowed, OK. The three children are all boys, except the first two.

And you're not going to let him get away with that, are you? So my eldest is 13, Hannah, Laura, who is 11, and Matthew, who's six. And they're not here this week. They'll be up for one day.

But what's it like in the price household? Well, it depends what happens. I mean, when the guinea pigs die, it's terrible. My children breed guinea pigs.

It's a good way of learning about life. We've had so many funerals and we really have them in style. I mean, no guinea pig has ever been buried like our guinea pigs.

Is that all you're going to tell us? What do you want to know? About dying guinea pigs? OK, we'll move swiftly on. Now this, tonight, you're speaking on one of the Beatitudes. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

Charles, I wonder if you would like to tell us just ways in which you yourself have seen God, the one who can't be seen, over this last year. That's right. This sounds like a paradox, doesn't it? No man can see God any time, it says in Scripture, yet those who are pure in heart see God.

And of course, that is the great joy and privilege of the Christian life. In all kinds of ways, we see God in action. I think very often we see God best in retrospect.

Job said on one occasion, if I look to the north, I catch no glimpse of him. I turn to the south, I cannot see him. I look to the east or the west, I can't see where God is.

And yet later he says, my ears have heard of you, but now my eyes have seen you. And he could look back and say, in all of this, God was at work. And I think that one of the great things in the Christian life is the ability to see God in ways that the natural eye never does.

We see God in creation, it says in Romans, men of that excuse, because creation reveals the creator. And of all people, we as Christians ought to have appreciation of beauty and God's hand in creation. I heard somebody say on one occasion, when an artist paints a picture, he does two things normally, or she does two things.

They copy something, so you look at the work of art and you recognize something, if it has any meaning. But the second thing they do is they express themselves. You look at the work of art and it tells you something about the artist.

If you look at Picasso, for instance, after a while you work out that's a woman. But then you say this, Picasso is weird because he sees things differently to the way I do. Now this person said when God as the supreme artist created the universe, he did only one thing.

He expressed himself. And so everything we see, whether it's the vastness of the universe in its unfathomable bigness, or whether it's in the minute detail of the little money spider that ran across the table when I was writing this afternoon, with little hairy legs and little beating heart and yards of probably blood veins and so on. God is detailed.

And we see God in creation, we see God in circumstances, often retrospectively we see him there. But it's good to know that when we don't understand the situation, don't understand the circumstances, as Jesus said in John 13 to Peter when he washed his feet, if you don't understand what I'm doing now, but one day you will. I'm going to stop you there.

Yes, thank you. It's a very good verse. Well, that's why I'm stopping you.

It's the danger of interviewing a preacher. You know, one question and he's off. Well, that first one didn't work, so that's why you're asking.

That's true. Now from tomorrow morning you're going to be teaching us from the book of Jeremiah. And I wonder if you'd just like to tell us perhaps what you have been praying for us as we're about to hear God speak through Jeremiah.

Well, firstly that you'll come because Jeremiah is a closed book to a lot of people. As a lot of the prophets are very difficult to pick up and read and simply understand what they're about. There's so much that is not clear on first reading without knowing background and so on.

But we're not going to be primarily concerned with the technical details. We need to understand some of that in order to get the message and the heart and the pulse of the book of Jeremiah. And my prayer is that we will learn what Jeremiah preached.

That beyond all the outward forms that are necessary to life, we might rediscover the reality of God himself. Working in us, in our situation, in our circumstances, in our nation. And we're going to look at Jeremiah himself a little bit because we can't understand his message without understanding himself.

The two are intricately bound up together. And so my prayer is that we might rediscover something of spiritual reality. If there was a title I was to give it, it would be rediscovering reality.

And I think that's what Jeremiah was concerned about. Great. Well, Charles, we're thankful that you're here.

Don't go away because we'd like to pray for you and with you. Not only for tonight but for each morning through this week. So please, let's join together in prayer.

Heavenly Father, we do want to thank you again for this great opportunity to be here in Keswick this week. To hear you speak to us. We thank you for Charles.

Thank you for all that you are doing in him and through him. Thank you for the gifts that you have given him. And we pray that because of your spirit at work within him this week, we all might hear you speak.

We pray for him tonight as he speaks that you will anoint him with your spirit. That you will use what he has prepared to speak into the hearts and minds and lives of each one of us. Give us ears to hear.

Give us minds to understand. Minds that are enlightened by your spirit. And give us hearts and wills that are warm towards you.

And Father, we pray for Charles too. In the arduous task of opening up the prophecy of Jeremiah to us each morning this week. And pray that you will richly bless him as he does this.

And in your goodness and mercy to each one of us, we pray that we will hear you speak through him. And that you will receive, our Lord and Father, all the honour and glory. For Jesus' sake.

Amen. And before Charles does come to speak to us, we're going to sing one more song to establish the fact that we need to make way for our King. The physical reality of his healing points also to a spiritual truth of the things he wants to do in our lives.

Let's stand and let's sing the words of Make Way number 72. Let's worship him. I have no gods before him, their thrones must fall.

The voice is raised. Make way, make way for Christ the King. He's risen now.

Impart your name to me. The dead shall live again. Well, if you've got your Bible tonight, the verse that will be our springboard is in Matthew chapter 5. You'll know that in these evening meetings through the week, we're looking into the Beatitudes which form the beginning of the Sermon on the Mount.

In Matthew 5, we're not following them in the order in which Jesus preached them or linking them together to try and see the developing message of those Beatitudes. We're taking them one by one and we're going to go down to verse 8 tonight. We'll be coming back in other evenings to some of the earlier ones, of course.

And verse 8 says, blessed are the pure in heart that they will see God. There's always a reason why people behave as they do. I heard one day a story of a man who was found lying face down on the aisle of a cinema.

And the assurant came along and said, excuse me, sir, you may not lie in the aisle. You need to get up and sit in the seat. And the man didn't move.

She said, sir, you may not lie in the aisle. Would you get up and sit in the seat? There's no response. She said, sir, if you don't get up and sit in the seat, I'm going to call the manager.

There's no response. So she called the manager. The manager came and said, sir, you may not lie in the aisle.

You must get up and sit in the seat. There's no response. He said, sir, you may not lie in the aisle.

Would you get up and sit in the seat? There's no response. He said, if you don't get up and sit in the seat, I will call the police. Well, the policeman came and he said, sir, you may not lie in the aisle.

You need to get up and sit in the seat. There was no response. If you don't get up and sit in the seat, I will arrest you.

There was still no response. The policeman said, I'm going to arrest you. First, I need some details.

Where did you come from? At that point, the man looked up and said, the balcony. There's always a reason why people behave as they do. And rather than being preoccupied with their behavior, we need to understand the reason.

Because it's very likely that amongst us tonight, many of us are baffled by our own behavior. Aren't you? Why do I do the things I do? Paul, in Romans 7, that familiar verse where he says, I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do, I do not do.

But what I hate, I do. There are things that are good and they're right and I want to do them, but I don't. There are things that are wrong and they're bad and I say, I will never do them again.

But you never guess what happens. I do them. Anybody here got that problem? Why? Well, the basic answer, of course, is there's something wrong with the human heart.

Do you know the Bible refers to the heart over 900 times? Not as part of your anatomy, that pump in the middle of your chest. When a boy says to a girl, I love you with all my heart, he doesn't mean I love you

with all my pump. But all that I am, mind, emotion, will.

And when the Bible speaks of the heart, of course, it's speaking of the very center of the human being. And unfortunately, the Scripture is not very complimentary to the human heart in those hundreds of references it makes. The very first time it ever speaks of the heart is in Genesis 6 verse 5 where it says, The Lord saw how great man's wickedness on the earth had become and that every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil all the time.

That's in Genesis 6. We'll look into Jeremiah this week. But from Jeremiah 17 verse 9, Jeremiah says, The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. After these beatitudes, Jesus talked in the seventh amount about the law.

And he said on one occasion, you've heard it was said, Do not commit adultery. But I tell you, anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart. He may not even know her name.

Never find out where she lives. Never have the courage to go knock on her door. But he says, he's guilty in his heart.

But marvelously also in Jeremiah 17, God says, I the Lord search the heart and examine the mind. That of course is frightening until we understand his purpose. I search the heart to understand it with all its corruption and deceit.

Because God says in effect, The heart is my workshop. That's where I do my business. Now I want to talk tonight about how a deceitful heart, which is the diagnosis through most of Scripture, of the human heart including yours and mine, becomes a pure heart.

And how the pure heart will see God. Now sin of course is a problem for everyone in this tent tonight. Basically I suggest to you the reason why sin is a problem to all of us is because we actually enjoy sin.

Something in us enjoys it. That's why it's a problem. You see temptation by definition is attractive, isn't it? Otherwise it wouldn't be temptation.

I mean by definition. For instance, I'm never tempted to walk in front of a moving bus. It's not attractive.

I am tempted sometimes to push somebody else in front of a moving bus. Why am I tempted? Because by definition temptation is attractive. And every time you sin and every time I sin, we may within 30 seconds be full of remorse or even repentance, but let's be honest, we did so because we wanted to.

Because the basic inclination of the heart is deceitful. Now says Jesus, the pure in heart will see God. Now there's something of a catch-22 situation in that statement because although on the one hand it's true, the pure in heart see God, it says elsewhere in Hebrews, without holiness no one will see the Lord.

On the other hand, it is equally true that it is seeing God that makes us aware of our hearts and leads us to that purifying of heart. So that when Job in Job 42 verse 5 and 6 says, My ears have heard of you, but now my eyes have seen you. I've seen God, he says, therefore I despise myself and repent in dust and ashes.

So having seen God, I've seen myself in my own heart. And I repent and cleanse. And of course, most famously Isaiah, in the year that King Uzziah died, you remember, he says in Isaiah 6, I saw the Lord seated on a throne, high and exalted.

The train of his robe filled the temple. And a few verses later, Isaiah's response is, Woe is me, I cried, I am ruined from a man of unclean lips. Seeing God, he says, I saw myself.

And I came in repentance. Actually, we only know what sin is when we know what God is like. What is sin? How do we define it? How do we recognize it? Is it simply a consensus that we agree amongst ourselves certain things are right and certain things are wrong? Is it simply antisocial behavior that affects somebody else that's wrong? What defines sin? Well, you will know, I'm sure, that the word sin literally means, it's got various meanings, but literally, it means to miss the mark.

I understand it was used in archery. And if you fired at a target and you missed, it was called sin. Now, if sin is to miss the mark, we do not know what sin is unless we know what the mark is that we've missed.

What is the mark? Romans 3.23 says, For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. What is the glory of God? Well, the glory of God is the character of God. The moral character of God.

Which means if sin is coming short of God's character, we only understand what sin is when we understand who God is. And it's only when we see God that we understand from His perspective what our failure is and what sin is. That's why most people don't become aware of their sin by having sin preached to them.

They become aware of their sin when God is preached, when Christ is preached. It's like in Acts chapter 2 on the day of Pentecost when Peter, you recall, got up and preached to the many who had gathered in Jerusalem for that festival of Pentecost. And if you read his message, he talks about Christ, His life, His death, His burial, His resurrection, His ascension.

He concludes, Therefore, this Jesus, let all Israel be short of this. God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ. And his message was entirely about Christ.

And then it says in Acts 2.37, When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, Brothers, what shall we do? Now, I find that very interesting because Peter hadn't told them they could do anything. He wasn't preaching about them, he was preaching about Christ. But as he proclaimed Christ and they saw and understood Christ, they said, What shall we do? Because in being aware of Him, they became aware of their failure.

I remember some years ago, there was an advert on television for some washing powder and somebody came onto the screen wearing a white shirt washed in ordinary washing powder. And he sort of modeled his nice white shirt and he looked at it and said, Well, that's a nice white shirt washed in ordinary washing powder. And then somebody else came onto the screen wearing a shirt washed in, I don't know, fairy liquid or something.

What do you wash shirts in? Did I get it wrong? Some special washing powder. And when the man with the shirt washed in special washing powder stood alongside the man with the shirt washed in ordinary washing powder, his face fell. And he began to think to himself, I've got a dirty shirt on.

It's grey. Now, if you went to him and said, Excuse me, you've got a dirty shirt. He'd say, What do you mean? I've just washed it in ordinary washing powder.

But when he stood alongside the man with the shirt washed in special washing powder, he said, Uh-oh, I've got a dirty shirt on. Do you know how people become aware of their sin? By becoming aware of God.

When I was a student in Glasgow, I remember there was a fellow student there who believed that if people needed to know their need of a savior, they needed to know they were sinners.

So that was your starting point. They weren't aware of their sin. They wouldn't be aware of their need for savings.

So his starting point was always the same. Make people aware of their sin. And his witnessing was basically saying to people, Excuse me, did you know you were a dirty, filthy, miserable, rotten, stinking sinner? And the wrath of God is on you.

And he wondered why people didn't thank him. And often when we used to have reports back on outreach, he would say, I've been persecuted for righteousness sake once again. But it wasn't for righteousness sake, it was for being foolish.

But the marvelous thing is, that when you declare Christ and people see Christ and they see God in action, and they see something of the character of God, do you know what they say? They say what Isaiah said. I'm a dirty, filthy, miserable, rotten, stinking sinner. Why? Because I've seen God.

And you see, like Job, my ears had heard of you, now my eyes have seen you, therefore I despise myself and repent in dust and ashes. And here's the root, you see. Those who see God, and it's by the revelation of the Holy Spirit that we recognize and see God and see Christ in all his beauty and perfection.

When we see God, we become aware of our own impurity of heart. And when God makes us aware of our own impurity of heart, it is never in order that he might humiliate us, or condemn us, or rub our nose in our own dirt. It is always that he may cleanse us and purify us.

Which is why, of course, the first note of response in the gospel is that of repentance and cleansing. And I would suggest that amongst the crowd here tonight, you may have been a Christian for many years, some of you, but I would suggest that there are many here tonight, though you've been a Christian for a long time perhaps, and you've still never understood the nature of your forgiveness. I find I meet and talk with people frequently who live under a sense of guilt and a sense of condemnation.

I remember talking to a lady a while ago in her 50s, and she said to me 30 years ago when she was a teenager, she said, I got involved in some things that were wrong. And every night I have asked God to forgive me for those things. She said, those things have lived with me.

They have had their effect on my marriage. They've had their effect on my relationship with my children. I've been asked, she said, to teach a Sunday school class in my church, and I don't because I'm condemned by what happened 30 years ago.

She had no assurance of forgiveness. Maybe there's some here, and you are in that same situation. There is an acute sensitivity to your sin, to your failure, to your guilt, and you find it hard to understand how you can possibly be forgiven and cleansed.

I'm going to ask you a very important question. I'm going to ask you to respond to this question by putting your hand up in a moment. And the question is this.

When you come to God and you confess your sin and you appeal to Him for forgiveness, do you appeal to His justice or do you appeal to His mercy? In other words, is it on the grounds of justice that God forgives

you or is it on the grounds of mercy that He forgives you? Now, don't be clever and say it's both because in a sense, of course, that's true. But if your appeal is to God's justice when you ask Him for cleansing, would you put your hand up? There's about six hands. A few more, about ten hands.

Unless most of you are not playing. If you appeal to His mercy, would you put your hand up? All right, that is the vast majority of you. Now, I asked you the questions.

I thought you might get it wrong. And you did. And this is very important.

Very important we understand this. What does John say? If we confess our sins, He is faithful and what? Oh, you know that verse. Faithful and just.

What does he mean? You see, I find in talking with folks that the reason why they have great difficulty understanding their forgiveness is that they are appealing to the mercy of God and they have this feeling, I've gone once too many times. I've confessed the same sin again and again and God has lost patience with me. But you see, you wouldn't need the cross if God would have given you on the basis of mercy.

He could simply give us a nod and a wink and say, I understand, let's forget it this time. Most of us would be happy with that. Why did Jesus die? He died in order to satisfy the just demands of a holy God because you see, justice and mercy actually are not compatible with each other, if you think about it.

Justice, you see, is giving what we deserve. Mercy is not giving what we deserve. You can't exercise justice and mercy at the same time to the same person in the same situation.

For a very simple illustration, if I were to drive my car through Keswick at 60 miles an hour, which you couldn't because you couldn't fit through at that speed, but supposing I did and a police car chased me at 70 miles an hour, pulled me up, and I was brought into court, they might say, were you driving your car at 60 miles an hour through Keswick, which has a 30 mile limit? I might say, yes, your honor, I'm guilty. He can do one of two things. He can deal with me on the basis of justice and say, I'm going to fine you 100 pounds, three points on your license.

Or he can deal with me on the basis of mercy and say, I understand you're in a hurry and it's quite remarkable you could get up that speed in Keswick anyway, so we're impressed. Don't do it again. And let me go free.

Mercy. But what he cannot do, of course, is both. Unless there is the involvement of a third party who meets the demands of justice and says, I'll pay the 100 pounds.

And that third person coming on my behalf allows me then to walk out with I haven't paid a penny and the recipient of mercy. But next time I meet the policeman, I don't cower and say, uh-oh, he remembered last time I broke the speed limit because justice has been done. But if your understanding is, I come to God and appeal to his mercy, the time will come you're not sure if there's any mercy left.

Let me illustrate this very simply. Supposing tonight at the end of this meeting you went back into Keswick and you went into a coffee bar, cafe there, and you said to the person, look, I'm very, very sorry, but I actually forgot to bring any money with me tonight, but I am dying for a cup of coffee. Would you give me a cup of coffee? He might say, but I don't do that.

Well, I know you don't, but you're doing such a good trade tonight, you wouldn't miss it. Just this once, I'm dying of thirst, so out of his kindness he might say, all right, here's a cup of coffee, don't tell anybody. And you say, thank you.

Well, he's been very kind to you. Supposing tomorrow night at the end of the meeting you went back down the same road, popped into the same cafe and said, listen, you would never believe this, I forgot to bring any money again. Could I have another cup of coffee? He'd say, look, I gave you one last night, that was the exception.

You say, but please, I really don't normally do this, it's just a coincidence, two nights in a row. Please give me another cup of coffee. And he says, well, look, I really don't like doing this, but okay, you can have another cup of coffee.

Don't tell anybody, drink it quick and go. The third night you walked into his cafe and said, excuse me, you'll never guess this, he'd say, I'm sorry, you are not getting another cup of coffee. But supposing I dropped into the coffee bar and I said, I have a friend who's going to be calling in these next few nights, they don't have any money, I want to give you ten pounds, that'll cover a cup of coffee and a biscuit every night this week.

You walk into the coffee bar and say, look, I don't have any money, he'd say, no problem, have a cup of coffee. Would you like a penguin to go with it? You go back in the next night and he'll say, hey, good evening, sit in your normal place, I'll get you the coffee. You go in the third night and he says, have you had a good day? Listen, would you like a Mars bar tonight? Because I've got plenty of money in the till here.

Now listen, I'm not talking about cheap grace, don't misunderstand me, but I'll tell you this, as you and I come in repentance and confess our sin, we do not deserve forgiveness. Of course we don't. But there's money in the till, the precious blood of Christ.

You say, Lord Jesus, I'm sorry. Father, forgive me. The father looks to the son, the son says, it's pain.

You and I, no matter what our past, no matter what our failings, no matter how repeatedly we fail, and there are all kinds of reasons why we fail again and again and again in the same area. You can come in repentance, confession. The only way sin ever leaves your body, by the way, is through the mouth.

You confess it. He's faithful and just. Of course, behind the cross is the mercy and the love of God.

Of course, God sent his son as an act of supreme love, as a demonstration of his mercy towards us. But as we come before God, we appeal to his justice. Father, Christ has paid for this.

I'm sorry. That's why in Hebrews chapter 4, he says, let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need. We approach the throne of grace not in an attitude of cockiness and arrogance, but in humility, but with confidence, because Jesus Christ legally dealt with our sin before the demand of a holy just God.

And do you know one of the greatest needs of the human heart is for cleansing? I was driving my car down the road one day listening to an interview on Radio 4. The head of a psychiatric unit of a hospital in Scotland was being interviewed. As far as I know, this man was not a Christian, but he said in the course of the interview, if my patients could be assured of forgiveness, half of them could go home tomorrow. And

I pulled my car to the side of the road and wrote it down.

My patients could be assured of forgiveness, half of them could go home tomorrow, he said. In other words, it's guilt that's broken them down inside. And even more amazingly, in an article in Newsweek magazine, they quoted there an American psychiatrist who said, I have no way of verifying this, but he said, 95% of insanity in the United States has its roots in the refusal to accept forgiveness.

And you know, I sit with Christians not just once in a while, but frequently. And at the root of their sense of failure and frustration is this lack of confidence and clean. They know the heart is deceitful, but they do not know that Jesus Christ has paid in full.

And on the grounds of God's justice, as we confess he's forgiven. You see, God doesn't just forgive, he forgives on the grounds of the work of Christ on the cross. That's why, of course, if we leave out the cross, we have no gospel.

And the most marvelous thing is that we can come and know that our hearts, dirty as they are by nature, can be cleansed. And I wrote down here in my notes all that the Scripture says or some of what it says about forgiveness, and we haven't time to talk about it, but just to quote some verses. As far as the east is from the west, it says in Psalm 103, so far as he removed our transgressions from us.

He doesn't say as far as the north is from the south. The north is a fixed point. The south is a fixed point.

If you were to go north, it's not long before you go over the North Pole and begin to go south. If you go east, you keep going east. You never begin to go west.

If you go west, you keep going west. You never begin to go east. It's as far as the east is from the west.

Infinity. He's removed our sins from us. Not only that, Isaiah 38 says, you put all my sins behind your back.

Where is there such a place as behind God's back? He's omnipresent in all places at all time. So where is it that is behind his back? Well, of course, it doesn't exist. He puts it where it doesn't exist.

Isaiah 43 says, I'll remember your sins no more. That doesn't mean God's forgetful. It means that he takes them out of his memory.

He never recalls them. We can't do that, of course. We remember.

We hold prejudices. God doesn't. I heard about two brothers one day who were fighting all day long.

Their mother, that night as she put them to bed, tried to appeal to them to make up before they went to bed and they didn't. She said to the older of the two brothers, why don't you forgive your brother? Why don't you make it up with him tonight before you go to bed? He said, I'm not going to make it up with him. It's his fault.

He started it. So his mother tried to appeal to his sentiment a bit and she said, just suppose that during the night your brother died. Wouldn't you be sorry in the morning if you hadn't forgiven him? And the boy thought for a moment and said, all right, I'll forgive him.

But if he's alive in the morning. I think sometimes we have that fear about God, don't we? I confess my sin, but what about the morning? I'll tell you what about the morning. Romans 8 verse 1 says, there is no

condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus.

You see, whenever God speaks about our sin, He never condemns. When the devil speaks about our sin, he does condemn. We're told in Revelation 12, he's the accuser of the brethren.

You see, both God and Satan speak about your sin. Satan condemns, God convicts, and there's a big difference. Condemnation is like a wet blanket that sits on you and there's no way out.

Conviction, which is the work of the Holy Spirit in our hearts, makes us aware of our sin, but at the same time makes us aware of the way out and takes us to the cross. And if you're under condemnation, you can be sure of this. It's not of God, it's from the devil.

He's the accuser of the brethren. I love that statement in 1 John 4, 17, which says, on the day of judgment, we will have confidence. Let me just read it to you to get it right.

1 John chapter 4 and verse 17. It says, In this way love is made complete among us, so that we will have confidence on the day of judgment, because in this world we are like Him. Isn't that marvelous? On the day of judgment, what is the ground of our confidence? That we are like Him.

Why? Because one day He was like me. He who knew no sin was made sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Christ. And you see, the marvelous, marvelous thing is, it doesn't matter who you are, it doesn't matter what your background, it doesn't matter what your guilt, it doesn't matter how frequently you fall into the pit.

Every time you come in repentance and say, Lord, I'm sorry. Please forgive me. He does.

Because Jesus is paying. But let me finish. I said at the beginning, this is a bit of a catch-22 situation.

The pure in heart, see God. Seeing God is what makes us aware of the impurity of our hearts. It then brings us to the cross for cleansing.

But actually it isn't a catch-22 situation because the word used here, blessed are the pure in heart, is not pure in the sense of being perfect. There are three Greek words that translate as pure in the English. In the New Testament, this is the word *katharos*.

It means pure not in the sense of being perfect, but in the sense of being uncontaminated, unmixed. If you were to take some corn, for instance, and you were to harvest it, and you were to separate it from the straw and blow away the chaff, you're left with pure corn. It may not be grade A1, but it's pure corn in the sense it's unmixed with anything.

If you had wine that was not diluted, it would be *katharos*, pure wine. It may taste like vinegar or petrol, but it's pure wine. This is not speaking of being pure in the sense of having a heart that's perfect.

Because the deceit of your heart and the deceit of my heart will operate till the day I die. But rather in the sense, the best what I can think of is of being single-minded. As the Apostle Paul wrote, this one thing I do, he said to the Philippian Christians, not these 20 things I dabble with, one of them is my Christianity, one of them is my family, one of them is my work, another is my hobbies, but this one thing I do, the permeating everything else that makes me what I am, every other interest in my life, this one thing I do, I press on to know him.

It says in Psalm 86, Give me an undivided heart, that I might fear your name. Because you can be sure of this, the secular will always swallow the spiritual in a divided heart. Ezekiel 11, 19 says, I'll give them an undivided heart and put a new spirit in them.

And this pure heart is one that having been cleansed, then becomes single-minded in that the goals and the ambitions of my life are the goals and ambitions of Jesus Christ in my life. We'll recognize the failure of our hearts until the day we die. Like Isaiah, as we see God, we'll say again and again and again and again, Woe is me.

And we'll come for cleansing. But this purity of heart, katharos, is having been cleansed, saying despite the frailty of my own heart and the weakness of my own sinful nature, I wake up to every new day and say, Lord Jesus Christ, thank you so much that you've cleansed me, you've saved me, you've come by your Holy Spirit to live within me. This one thing I do, I make it my goal to know you, know the power of your resurrection.

That passage in which he says that goes on to say, share your sufferings. You know the remarkable thing? You begin to see God. Begin to see God as we said just now when I was talking to Elaine.

In circumstances, in events, things cease to frighten you the way they used to because behind what is physical and visible and tangible is the unseen sovereignty of God. How's your heart tonight? Is it clean? You may have been a Christian for many years. You need to come to the Lord Jesus Christ tonight and say, Lord, I'm sorry.

I've never accepted and understood. It's because of your justice that you deal with my sin. You look at the cross and I'm forgiven.

Because there's money in the till. Thank you. Thank you.

And having been cleansed with that single-minded this one thing I do, I go into life with all that it throws at me. And you see God. Let's pray together.

We thank you so much. Lord Jesus Christ, this isn't pie in the sky. You don't put our heads into the clouds.

You put our feet onto the ground. You enable us in a real world with all its failure, with all its corruption, with our hearts that we know only too well. Still, take the diagnosis that Jeremiah gave that they're desperately wicked.

But thank you so much for the cleansing of the blood of Jesus, for the implanting of the Holy Spirit within us, that he in us becomes our strength. That this one thing I do with that single-minded sense of direction, we press on to know you, to know your purpose, to know your plans, to know the outworking of all that you want to accomplish. In all the circumstances of life, we can see you.

We walk by faith, not by sight. And we thank you in anticipation of all that you will do in each one of us here, as we trust you to lead us on. In Jesus' name.

Amen. Thank you, Charles. Our meeting is over, but if you would like to talk to someone this evening about what Charles has presented, then please do come to the front.

There'll be a number of people. They'll be wearing yellow badges, which means they're part of our care team this week. And you may want to talk and pray with someone before the evening is over.

We're going to go out singing together Purify My Heart. Purify my heart. Let me be as gold.

Precious silver. Purify my heart. Let me be as gold.

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/6Cv9uljRReo.mp4>

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