

## **“The Path to Joy, Part 5”**

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Scriptural Foundation: Matthew 5:1-12, NIV

We take special focus on the sixth Beatitude of the Sermon on the Mount. Here we will talk about “blessed are the pure in heart for they will see God.” That is our great anticipation when we arrive in glory, when we get to Heaven itself.

### **The Beatitudes**

<sup>1</sup>**Now when he saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to him,**

<sup>2</sup>**and he began to teach them saying:**

<sup>3</sup>*“Blessed are the poor in spirit,  
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

<sup>4</sup>*Blessed are those who mourn,  
for they will be comforted.*

<sup>5</sup>*Blessed are the meek,  
for they will inherit the earth.*

<sup>6</sup>*Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,  
for they will be filled.*

<sup>7</sup>*Blessed are the merciful,  
for they will be shown mercy.*

<sup>8</sup>***Blessed are the pure in heart,  
for they will see God.***

<sup>9</sup>*Blessed are the peacemakers,  
for they will be called sons of God.*

<sup>10</sup>*Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness,  
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

<sup>11</sup>*“Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. <sup>12</sup>Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”*

We willingly make great efforts and meet great costs in order to see objects and events that excite us. Some happily cross an ocean to see men and women punch a little yellow ball back and forth on a grass court at Wimbledon. Others will pay thousands of dollars to see the Chicago Cubs play in the World Series. Families will drive hundreds of miles to see mountains and streams, oceans, and even roller coasters. I consider my own life in recent months in the effort and expense I have made to see events and people who are precious and priceless to me.

In May we drove to Akron Ohio to see my nephew marry his sweet bride. What a precious, precious thing it was to be there. In June I traveled with my son and some other fathers and sons from our church to West Virginia so that, together, we might see the white water on the New River up close and personally. In July and August we plan to travel to several colleges to visit campuses which my oldest son may spend the next four years after he graduates. Each of these sites resist a price tag because they bring so much joy and because they are so important.

If you search the Internet you can access lists such as “Fifty Places to See Before You Die” or “Fifty Movies to See Before You Die”. It is evident that men and women long not just to read about events and to read about sites. Nor are we satisfied with listening to testimonies of other people who have seen these things, but we, as men and women, long to experience “seeing” for ourselves. What would you consider to be the “Number One Experience” of seeing in your life? Perhaps it was seeing your bride appear in glory at the back of the church on your wedding day; a sight you will never forget. Perhaps it was seeing a new-born baby.

Today, in Matthew 5, Jesus speaks of a “seeing” that outshines everything else, for this is a seeing that completes a person’s life. It is a seeing that satisfies the very purpose of our creation. It is a seeing that makes everything else whole and that fills us with joy. Here is what Jesus says,

<sup>8</sup> *“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.”*

They will see the invisible, holy, infinite, eternal, righteous, loving, gracious, and glorious God. The Good News of Jesus Christ is an offer for us to be able to see God for ourselves, not merely through the experience of others, but for ourselves and no vision brings greater joy than the vision of the glory of God.

In the Sermon on the Mount, which we are studying, this is the sixth description of a life that is blessed by God and that is placed on a path of joy. This statement by Jesus is one of the most profound utterances that we will find in all of the Bible. Anyone who reads these words with understanding is at once overwhelmed by the enormity of the promise and the awesomeness of its nature. It is my prayer that each one of us will grasp something of that which Jesus is offering, and that we will long to be a people who see God. Jesus reveals that the ultimate goal of the Christian life is to see God, for everyone who sees God delights in Him, enjoys Him, and glorifies Him forever and ever. Such seeing, Jesus says, is made possible only as we have a pure heart, for our heart is the eyes of our soul in which we engage God.

We are going to follow three points. First, we will look at the pricelessness of the prize. Then we are going to consider the problem of the pump. Finally, we will consider the prerequisite of purity.

We, first, will consider the prize and its pricelessness. The very essence of faith is to believe that God exists and that He rewards those who seek Him; that He gives prizes to those who seek Him, and that He offers special promises. We begin with this promise that Jesus offers, for I fear that many do not read this verse and they do not fully or take time to engage what is being promised and as a result we are not energized by Jesus’ words. Jesus intends for us to be motivated and to be energized so that we might pursue purity of heart.

God never sets before His people weak and feeble prizes. No, this prize that Jesus sets before us is the grandest prize in all the world. This prize is meant as a motivation for us to rid ourselves of sin and to put sin to death in our lives and to fight against every enemy that would keep from seeing God and that would keep us from a pure heart. Jesus does not call us to something slight and small. No, this is an incredibly awesome promise to strengthen our resolve and to encourage us in our faith as we walk along in this world.

As a young boy I played in Little League baseball and one year the coach promised that if we won the game he would take us all out for an ice cream cone. This was meant to be an incentive for us to stay focused and to play hard and to put out a great amount of effort that was necessary in order to play the game rightly. It was very effective for a ten-year old; it kept us from looking around at the dandelions growing in the outfield and other distractions that are common in little boys at little league time. Yet, today I find that such a incentive, such a prize, such a motivation has lost something of its strength, that the offer of a small, soft-serve cone does not cause me to energized as it did at one time.

It is interesting to think what Jesus could have offered and what He could have promised when He said, “Blessed are the pure in heart, for...” He could have said, “...for they will have a good reputation among their peers,” and that would have been a great prize, wouldn’t it? He could have said, “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will set a great example for their children that they children might more likely follow.” We would say that that is a great, great promise. “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will be able to sleep at peace with themselves at night. They won’t toss and turn in their beds filled with shame and guilt for their lack of sincerity and integrity.” “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will be trusted in business. Others will see their integrity and trust them and they will prosper in their field.” He could have said, “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will enjoy a good marriage. Such is the stuff that provides the strength of glue to join a man and a woman in delightful relationship for a lifetime.”

If He would have said these things He would have been correct. All of these would have added great motivation and incentive for us.

Jesus also could have said, “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will be forgiven,” and that would have been an incredible thing, “and they will no longer stand before God condemned as men and as women. They no longer need to fear the Day of Judgment, for they will enter into Heaven and they will walk the streets of gold and they will pass by the pearly gates.” He could have said those things, but that is not what He said, for Jesus is reaching yet higher and He is offering to us something far, far, and away grander than all of these things. He said, “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.” For the one who has tasted of the Lord there is no greater offer.

For those who are not pure in heart, this seems like a bit of trivia, “To see God, that is no great thing and that doesn’t stir up my soul or energize my life,” but for those who are pure in, and as we begin to see God, we long for more and we recognize that this is the one thing that really, really matters. Everything else is ancillary to it. This is the one passion of the soul.

I am indebted to a little book that John Piper wrote entitled, “God is The Gospel”. I encourage you to read this, but let me give you a few excerpts from it because he speaks to this, that the greatest good in the Gospel is God Himself and the ability to see Him, to know Him, to enjoy Him, and delight in Him. The back of the jacket reads, “None of Christ’s Gospel deeds and none of our Gospel blessings are good news except as the means and savoring the glory of Christ. Forgiveness is good news because it opens the way to the enjoyment of God Himself. Justification is good news because it wins access to the presence and pleasures of God Himself. Eternal life is good news because it becomes the everlasting enjoyment of Christ. All of God’s gifts are loving only to the degree that they lead us to God Himself.” He writes, “My point in this book is that all of the saving events and all of the saving blessings of the Gospel are a means of getting obstacles out of the way so that we might know God and enjoy God most fully and that we might say so that we might see God.” The John Piper lists some of those Gospel blessings: propitiation, redemption, forgiveness, imputation, sanctification, liberation, healing, Heaven. “None of these is good news except for one reason – they bring us to God for our everlasting enjoyment of Him. If we believe all of these things have happened to us, but do not embrace them for the sake of getting to God, they have not happened to us. Christ did not die to forgive sinners who go on treasuring anything above seeing and savoring God. People who would be happy in Heaven if Christ were not there will not be there. The Gospel is not a way to get people to Heaven. It is a way to get people to God. It is a way of overcoming every obstacle to everlasting joy in God and if we don’t want God above all things we have not yet been converted by the Gospel.”

The Gospel itself is good news precisely because of this: Christ died for our sin in order to bring us to God, Peter would say.<sup>1</sup> That is the great and all-consuming prize and the preciousness of the joy.

Let me use an illustration that may help us understand why things, such as forgiveness and justification and access into Heaven and all of these other blessings that God attaches to His Gospel, are secondary to the one goal and the one objective of knowing and delighting and seeing God. In the first year of our marriage a family asked Kimberly and me to house sit for them. They were going to be gone a couple of weeks and they had a large home and they didn’t want to leave it vacant and empty and they had some pets to take care of. We were used to a tiny apartment and we thought that this would be great so we happily agreed to that. One afternoon, as we were exiting the house, I said to Kimberly, “Do you have the key?” She said, “Yes,” click, I shut the door and she said, “No!” At that point my flesh kicked in and I said some things that were not spirit led and that were not gentle. Afterwards, the Holy Spirit began communicating to me, as He tends to do when we sin, that I needed to talk to Kimberly and reconcile and seek forgiveness.

I ask you, why did I desire forgiveness from her so much? Was it because, up to this point, she happily prepared meals for me and I was fearful that if she didn’t forgive me I wouldn’t receive those meals anymore? Was it because I wanted forgiveness because, up to this point, she also took care of my laundry and if I didn’t receive forgiveness I might not have that accomplished for me as well? Was it so that I could be rid of the feeling of the shame and the guilt? Was it so that our physical relationship wouldn’t be hindered? I tell you, it was none of these things. The great motivating goal was that I wanted to see Kimberly again and that sin put an obstacle in our path of us “seeing” one another; that is to say, fellowshiping and relating to one another. The great delight in a marriage relationship is the oneness, it is that “seeing”, and it is that fellowship. It is not in the meals and in the laundry and in the good feelings and in the physical relationship. All of those things are a part of the marriage relationship, but the thing, the object, is this delight; it is this “seeing”.

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<sup>1</sup> 1 Peter 3:18

So it is with the Gospel for us. Of course we rejoice in all of the blessings that come from the Gospel, but the very center of it, and what makes all of these things really valuable, is the fact that there is a “seeing” and there is relationship and there is a knowing between us and God.

What does it mean to “see” God? Someone may say that this sounds very mystical and ethereal and hazy. What are we talking about when we talk about seeing God? There are three ideas in Scripture that stand out in regards to our seeing God. The first idea is a seeing in which we have personal access into God’s presence and we have a personal fellowship with God in the here-and-now.

The writer of Hebrews speaks of this when he writes, in Hebrews 10,

<sup>19</sup>Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place...

The “most holy place” was the place in the Temple where God’s presence locally dwelt. Up to this point, the Old Testament saints did not have confidence to enter into the Most Holy Place and they were forbidden to enter the Most Holy Place, but in this New Covenant he says, “Therefore, since we have confidence to enter into God’s very presence, to have access to God Himself, by the blood of Jesus Christ, let us draw near to God with a sincere heart.”<sup>2</sup>

This is something similar to what John speaks of in Revelation 3, when Jesus is speaking through John, and He says,

<sup>20</sup> *“Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me.”*

It is the offer of a personal relationship, of a personal access. When a person is single and they are dating, at the end of a date, they may ask the girl a question, “Is it okay if I see you again?” When they say this, they are not saying, “Is it okay if I take my binoculars out and watch you from a distance;” that would be kind of spooky! They are also not asking for a picture. They are asking if it is okay to meet together, face-to-face, and they talk with each other and they commune with each other; “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God,” and they will have this personal fellowship.

Seeing God also includes a personal awareness of God’s person throughout everyday life; a personal awareness that God is real, that He exists, that He is active, and that He is connected to this world and to our lives. How do we have a personal awareness of God’s person in our everyday life? One of the means is through Scripture. This is how God speaks to us and reveals Himself.

An unbeliever, one who does not have a pure heart because they have not been purified by God’s grace, will pick up the Scripture and apart from God’s active work in their life they will read this Book and they will see that “it is filled with strange sayings, even contradictions and things that are not true,” and they are filled with doubt and they cannot see God in the pages. You may ask if they see God there and they will answer that God is not there. Some may say that this is an awful Book, but a believer, one who has a pure heart and who is able to see God, picks up God’s Word, and as we read what do we see? We see God through the pages and most believers that I have talked to have these experiences where they say that they were have some problems and some struggles in their life and they opened up their Bible and it was as though God was speaking to them that day.

God makes Himself known to us. We see God because of the pure heart that God provides for us in the Gospel.

We also see God in nature. An unbeliever walks through the park on an evening night and what do they see? “There are some stars up in the sky. There is a moon. Isn’t that nice?” But, a believer walks through the park at night and they see God the Creator who with sovereign power and majesty created the stars and who is infinite. He created what appears to be an infinite universe and yet it is not infinite. It is tiny comparatively. He measures out the universe with the space of His hand and that is why we see something different.

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<sup>2</sup> Hebrews 10:22a

I love Psalm 28, because David is writing and he says,

<sup>1</sup> Ascribe to the LORD...glory and strength...

It appears as though David is experiencing at the time of his writing a severe thunderstorm. That is what I believe is happening; that is the setting. He is saying, "We need to stop and worship God with the angels. Let us ascribe the glory that is due His name." David continues,

<sup>3</sup> The voice of the LORD is over the waters; the God of glory thunders, the LORD thunders over the mighty waters. <sup>4</sup> The voice of the LORD is powerful; the voice of the LORD is majestic. <sup>5</sup> The voice of the LORD breaks the cedars... <sup>8</sup> The voice of the LORD shakes the desert... <sup>9</sup> The voice of the LORD twists the oaks and strips the forests bare. And in his temple all cry, "Glory!"

You can almost hear the lightning strike a tree near him and a big limb breaks off and he says that that is the voice of God.

When a believer walks through this world that God has created, we hear God say, "I am here and I am great and I am majestic and I am glorious and I am eternal and I am sovereign and I am omnipotent and I want you to know me and I want you to know the awesomeness of my nature."

We have a personal awareness of God's person in everyday life not only as we see God in Scripture and we see God in nature, but we also see God among His people in His church that Jesus Christ has established. Listen to a pastor of day's gone by by the name of Charles Spurgeon. He says, "The pure in heart see God in His church. The impure in heart cannot see Him there at all. To them the church of God is nothing but a conglomeration of divided sects. In looking upon these sects they see nothing but faults and failures and imperfections. It should always be remembered that every man see that which is according to his own nature. When the vulture soars in the sky, he sees the carrion wherever it may be and when the dove on silver wings mounts up to azure she sees the clean, winnowed corn wherever it may be. Unclean hearts see little or nothing of good among God's people, but the pure in heart see God in His church and rejoice to meet Him there."

What do you see when you come among God's people? Is it a fact that there are people in God's church who are hypocrites, doing wrong things, and acting in wrong ways? Yes, but a person with a pure heart is able to come amongst God's people and see God active and at work among God's people and in this rejoice.

Seeing God means that we have personal access and fellowship with Him, we have personal awareness of His being and of His presence in our everyday life, but third, and I believe it is this that Jesus highlights because He speaks in the future tense and that is in a personal encounter with the glory of God.

Moses prayed, "Show me your glory!"<sup>3</sup> This is what he desired above all things and God allowed him to see just a small fraction of His glory as He shaded Moses in the rock. God tells us and promises us, that one day, when we pass from this physical world, when Jesus Christ returns we will stand face-to-face before Him and we will see Him in all of His glory. For now, He mediates His presence in our sight through what the Apostle Paul says is a glass darkly and we see through a mirror dimly.<sup>4</sup> In other words, we have this mirror and it reflects God's image through the Scriptures to the world and to other believers, but it is a smudged mirror and we are not able to see clearly. But, then we will see face-to-face. John would say, "He who has this hope, the hope of seeing God and embracing that hope saying that this is what life is all about and it is my single focus and this is my single passion, purifies himself through that hope, even as He is pure."<sup>5</sup>

We as believers are given this precious promise by Jesus Christ so we grab onto it. Imagine standing before God and seeing His glory! If we can even begin to, in a small fraction, embrace what that day will be like, everything else, every other goal, and every other desire will pale in significance.

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<sup>3</sup> Exodus 33:18

<sup>4</sup> 1 Corinthians 13:12

<sup>5</sup> 1 John 3:3

We now want to consider the problem of our pump. The physical heart acts as a pump for the body to transport oxygenated blood to our brain and to the rest of our systems. The spiritual heart is a pump for the soul to transport life-giving grace throughout our system. That is why God would say in Proverbs 4,

<sup>23</sup> Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life.

It is the pump which provides life throughout your whole person.

Jesus is not content with merely outward, moral purity. He does not say, “Blessed are the pure in language...” He does not say, “Blessed are those who are pure in their actions...” He does not say, “Blessed are those who are pure in their relationships...” He does not say, “Blessed are those who are pure in their religious observances...”, or “Blessed are those who are pure in their doctrinal statement...” All of these things are important, don’t get me wrong, but the central issue of purity has not to do with these matters. The central issue of our purity which will either enable us to see God or become an obstacle wall and a barrier over which we will never be able to see God is the purity of our heart, of our inward person, and of who we are. When we stand before God, it is not who we appear to be before others, not who we are in our reputation, and not who we are in a church setting, but it is who we really are in our thinking, in our affections, and in our will.

Man looks at the outward appearance and that is the reason why we put so much emphasis on being pure in the externals. God looks at the heart and what does He see? Here we discover that there is a grave problem with you and me and it is this: God looks at our heart and He says that our heart is deceitful above all else and it is desperately wicked;<sup>6</sup> that is to say, in other translations of Jeremiah 17, it is without cure. There is no cure known to man for the disease that has ravaged our heart. It is without cure.

Turn to Matthew 15 and read with me what Jesus says about the heart,

<sup>18</sup> *“But the things that come out of the mouth come from the heart, and these make a man ‘unclean.’* <sup>19</sup> *For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, slander.* <sup>20</sup> *These are what make a man ‘unclean’...*”

The condition of our heart is smudged and dirty so we cannot see out of it. I remember a friend asked me, while I was a student at Moody Bible Institute, if I would drive his car and follow him to a certain destination. It was the winter and it had snowed, but they had put a lot of salt on the roads so the roads and highways were very wet. I got in his car and I was following him. I was doing great. Semi-trailer trucks were on either side of me and they were splashing up this salty mix. I turned on the windshield wipers and I hit the button for the washer fluid. The windshield wipers worked, but there was no fluid. It was a bright, sunny morning so the wipers smeared this stuff all over and there was a white coating. The sunlight hit and reflected off of it. All I could see was white! I couldn’t see anything anymore. I am in the middle of this four-lane highway and I don’t know where I am and I am supposed to follow this guy. I don’t know how I survived that day, but the Lord allowed a tiny corner of the window for me to see through. God says that this is the condition of our heart and we don’t even have that tiny piece of clean to see through. There is nothing to see through, and we are this highway going in a direction that leads to death. That is where we are and we need to be able to see clearly so that we can see God and arrive at our destination.

The tragic fallacy of our time is that human pain and suffering and misery is due to a lack of education or a lack of money. I heard an evangelical preacher recently say, “The greatest problem facing our city is...” and I thought that he was going to give them the Gospel and that he was going to talk about sin and he is going to talk about the nature of the heart and he is going to talk about the need for Jesus, and he said, “...poverty,” and when he said that my heart sunk. Why would we deceive people in this way? This is not what God says. We can follow every bit of human wretchedness and every bit of human misery, and if we follow it back to its source what we will find at the source is what Jesus says is that it is out of the heart that come evil thoughts, adultery, murders, slanders, and lie-telling, and everything else. This is where it comes from and this is the great problem that we face and it is a problem that no amount of education and no amount of monetary influence could ever possibly be able to overcome.

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<sup>6</sup> Jeremiah 17:9

Please do not be mistaken, I am for education and I am for helping those who are in impoverished conditions, but friends, racism, crime, family breakups, and poverty all would disappear overnight if man's heart would become pure. This is the reason why as Christ's church, here is what we do, we concentrate and we focus on the Gospel. It is not as though telling the Gospel is the only thing. There should be expressions of mercy that we exhibit, but it is the main thing and we must never move away from this main thing.

This leads us to our last point and that is the pre-requisite of purity. Blessed are the pure in heart. What does it mean to be pure? To be pure certainly does mean to be clean, to be spotless, without defilement, and free from dirt and stain. Primarily, to be clean, to be pure of heart means to be undivided and to be sincere. It was used of wine that was not mixed with water; that is to say, it was "pure" wine. A heart that is pure is a heart that does not have a mixture and it is not divided.

James speaks of this kind of the lack of purity when he says, "Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you men of a double-mind."<sup>7</sup> The opposite of having a pure heart is to have a double-mind, or a divided heart, a heart that has one foot in the flesh, in this world, and in our own agenda, and another foot with God. We don't want to be completely abandoned by God, but it is a heart that waivers between two opinions. One the one hand, "There is a lot I like about this life that is headed in this direction of my own choosing." One the other hand, "There is a lot I like about this life that is headed in the direction of God. I like the idea of Heaven. I like the idea of forgiveness. I like the idea of not being completely overtaken by sin." So, we become double-minded and we seek to have two masters and we listen to both; there are two sets of controls.

Have you ever driven a car with two steering wheels? It is a heart that is divided and that is double-minded. Of course, tragedy ensues. We have to ask ourselves if our heart is divided or is it pure. A double-minded man, one who has not fully decided to follow Jesus and one who desires two masters – one that is interested in more protecting reputation than being authentic and being real, than being consistent and sincere in public and in private – such a life of impurity cannot see God and never will be able to.

There is a great principle that I believe is important for us to learn: who we are determines what we see.

My youngest son, Jackson, loves music, especially "high music" – classical music, music that is trained and intricate in its nature. Recently he said, "Could you please buy for me a movie?" I didn't know what movie it was going to be, maybe a Disney animated movie or something like that. He said, "I desire to have 'The Phantom of the Opera.'" "Really! I have never had that desire." If you have ever seen "The Phantom of the Opera" you know that it is filled with wonderful music, but it is high music and it is trained music. There is a story to it, but it is all about music. We found it on sale and we bought it. He watched it and was just enraptured the entire time. He was loving every minute of it.

The next day he wanted to watch it again, so we let him watch it again. The next day he wanted to watch it again and each time he was enraptured with the music.

My oldest son, Alexander, is not so musically inclined. He likes music, but it is the contemporary praise and worship music. He was sitting at the third showing that Jackson was having and in the middle of it, he gets up in frustration and says, "This music vexes my soul!" I believe that he had heard his mom say that about the music he listens to. They are both watching the same movie, but they were seeing completely different things, weren't they? Who we are determines what we see.

Many will hear of Jesus and will hear how He was born of a virgin, lived a perfect and spotless and sinless life, going about performing miracles to reveal that He is the Son of God, and hear His call for repentance and His call to come and believe and commit themselves and follow Him. They will hear of His death, this Innocent One, who is able to free Himself with a word toward the angels, submitting Himself to the cruelty of mankind and to man's wicked designs, of His burial and of His ascension into Heaven, and they will shrug their shoulders and will say, "I see nothing."

Then there are those who will hear that same story and they say, "I see everything!"

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<sup>7</sup> James 4:8b

“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.” How does one become pure? First, we must understand that God alone can make an impure heart pure. You cannot purify your own heart and we cannot reform ourselves into purity. The stains run too deep. Only God can do that, but that is exactly what God offers us in Christ; that if we repent of our sin and we trust in Jesus, and trust in the One who died in our place, and trust in the One whose power resurrected Him from the dead, trust in this One and He is able to give us a new heart and He is able to bring us to God.

Friend, do you have a pure heart? The pursuit of a pure heart is more than just the beginning step of trusting in Jesus Christ and allowing God to change the current of our heart; a heart that is moving toward the defilement and moving toward the garbage dump, and to take the current of that river and twist it in such a way so that now it is moving and rolling toward this precious stream, this garden, that God has for us. Now, if this has happened, please understand that much of our lack of our ability to see God in Scripture and in the world and in the everyday life about us has to do with our own culpability in allowing mud to spatter the heart that God has made clean.

This is the reason why James would say, “Purify your hearts, you sinners.”<sup>8</sup> God calls us to actively pursue purity of heart. We are not to be passive. This is an active pursuit and it is an active fight we engage in to draw near to God so that He can purify us. We know that God is the ultimate One who must purify us or else there is no hope for purity at all, but we do not allow the fact that God is the One who works to purify us to grow casual about our sin. Rather we recognize, “God, you purified my heart and you have given me the resources to continue to walk in greater and greater purity, and the more I walk in purity the more I will see You, and the more I see You the more delight I will have in You, and the more delight I have in You the more I want to be pure.” We want to be on that path in our Christian life.

Jesus said it when He said, “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.”

I invite you, friend, if you have not yet trusted in Jesus Christ as your Savior, that this day would be the day that you would repent and turn from your sin and say, “God, I want to see you and I want to know you and you offer for me to come to Jesus so that He might change my heart and make me ready and fit for your presence.” God will be gracious to you if you call out to Him in humility and faith.

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<sup>8</sup> James 4:8