

Walking in the *Foot Prints* of Jesus

A Discipleship Journey



Beatitudes

Week 34

Blessed are the Pure in Heart; They shall see God

This weekly material is offered to support our Discipleship Journey as we walk in the foot prints of Jesus.

We encourage you to use this material as a part of your daily prayer practice as follows:

- ❖ Begin with the Opening Prayer.
- ❖ Reflect on: *Blessed are the Pure in Heart; They shall see God.*
- ❖ Close with the Closing Prayer.

Let us pray for each other that we are transformed, as individuals and as community, by this Discipleship Journey.

Opening Prayer

Lord Jesus, we praise You, for You are merciful. You died on the cross for our sins and rose to restore us to fullness of life in You. Forgive us for the times we've turned away from You and others and did not earnestly seek You. In Your Scripture You tell us, "the water I shall give will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life." (John 4:14b) Thank You for giving us Your mercy and healing in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Help us to know that You long to shower us with Your mercy. Give us the courage to face that which alienates us from You and allow You to tear down the walls that separate us from You. Help us to seek You often in Your Sacrament of Mercy. Jesus, we trust in You. We make this prayer in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

AMEN

Reflection:

Blessed are the Pure in Heart; They shall see God

Jesus' Sermon on the Mount, beginning with the Beatitudes, invites us into personal transformation, to step into a way of being which brings peace, joy, and hope into the world. The first four Beatitudes focus us inward, on our interior disposition, the way we see ourselves in relation to God and creation. The remaining Beatitudes speak to how these virtues are seen in our words and actions. This month we reflect on what it means to be *pure in heart*.

According to Pope Francis, the pure in heart are those whose hearts are simple and undefiled. Throughout Scripture, the state of our heart is used to describe our real intentions, the things we truly seek and desire. The state of our heart is our primary agenda for all that we do and, as our primary agenda, determines our actions and behavior. Jesus asks us to protect our heart, to keep it pure so that we can serve God and bring about His plan for the world.

According to Jesus, these surface actions, how we "see", originate in the internal dispositions of our heart – i.e., the heart "speaks" through the eye. If the eye is clear-sighted or undivided, it will reflect an inner light that flows from God's blessed presence and favor:

"The eye is the body's lamp. If your eyes are good, your body will be filled with light; if your eyes are bad, your body will be in darkness. And if your light is darkness, how deep will the darkness be!"
(Matt 6:21 – 23)

We all have attitudes and beliefs, ways of seeing ourselves and the world that block our hearts from being pure. What gets in the way? Obstacles to being pure in heart include:

- Being full of cares and anxieties; always running around; controlled by distractions and preoccupied with surface concerns and anxieties.
- Having the "eye of pleasure"; seek instant gratification; avoid any pain; being with "significant" people; having exciting experiences; and accumulating goods.
- The "ideal" look: being preoccupied with comparing ourselves to others in terms of power, possessions, or image; being unable to accept others so we often relate to others with anger and judgment.
- Resentment or unforgiveness; often expressed in anger, criticism, envy, gossip, and, especially, unforgiveness.

When we are controlled by these obstacles of a pure heart, or "looks", we cannot see, and because we cannot see, we remain untransformed. The process of coming to purity in heart demands that we move beyond these surface cares to be grounded in authentic cares. When we are able to do that, this Beatitude tells us we will *see God*. "Seeing God" means to dwell in God's presence.

Perhaps the best defense against this impurity is awareness. Simply pay attention to your thoughts, attitudes, and beliefs. Listen to the words you use and the feelings attached to them. Then ask yourself, "How do these words or actions reveal my heart?"

When the heart is right, seeing will be right. Jesus ties together heart and sight. All we need to do is keep the lens clean, keep our heart pure, and we will dwell in God and God will dwell in us.

Closing Prayer

The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it,
the world and all those who live in it;
for He founded it upon the ocean,
and established it on the rivers.

Who may ascend the mountain of the Lord?
Who shall stand in His holy place?
Those who have clean hands and pure hearts,
who do not lift up their souls to what is false
and do not swear deceitfully.
They will receive blessing from the Lord,
a just reward from God, his deliverer.
Such is the company of those who seek Him,
who seek the face of the God of Jacob.

Psalm 24 - Verses 1 - 6