

Heart Diagnosis

Արտի Ախտաճանաչում

Matthew 5:1-11

The heart is an amazing organ in our bodies. It pumps 2000 gallons of blood every day. It sends the blood through the veins and blood vessels all over the body. It is literally the main engine running our bodies.

The heart is also used as a symbol of love. All over we saw red hearts, representing love. In fact, only after the 12th century, the heart became a symbol of love. “The heart shape (♥) is an ideograph used to express the idea of the ‘heart’ in its metaphorical or symbolic sense as the center of emotion, including affection and love, especially (but not exclusively) romantic love.”¹

How about the heart in the Bible?

Today we move on to the sixth beatitude:

“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.” (Matthew 5:8 ESV)

What does Jesus mean by “the pure in heart”?

What does it mean to “see God”? Can we see God?

1. Pure

The word in Greek is *Katheros* that means ‘clean and pure in the physical, religious or ethical realm’. **In the physical realm**, it was used of purify metals or clean water. **In the religious and ethical realm**, it was used of free from corrupt desire, from sin and guilt; free from every admixture of what is false; sincere genuine.²

In the Old Testament, we find similar words which **represent ritual purity**. Religious purity was very important in those days. Let us assume someone had leprosy. That was considered an impurity. That person would live alone and could not worship in public. If that person was healed, the priest would examine and decide if the person was clean. Another example of impurity is a dead body. No one wanted to touch it. Also, women were considered unclean during several

days of the month. So, there was a lot behind this word for purity in the Old Testament.

2. Heart

Scriptures inform us that **grief** (John 14:1), **desires** (Matthew 5:28), **joy** (Ephesians 5:19), **understanding** (Isaiah 6:10; Matthew 13:15), **thoughts and reasoning** (Genesis 6:5; Hebrews 4:12; Mark 2:8), and, most importantly, **faith and belief** (Hebrews 3:12; Romans 10:10; Mark 11:23) are all products of the **heart**. Also, Jesus tells us that the **heart is a repository for good and evil** and that what comes out of our mouth – good or bad – begins in the heart (Luke 6:43-45).

Even though the heart is a muscle that keeps the body alive, Biblically it is considered the **center of one's being**. **It is the control center** of one's life. It is the center of the emotions, the thoughts and the will. **It is where decisions are made.**

One of my favorite stories is how God chose David. Samuel the prophet was assigned the task of choosing the next king from Jesse's sons. Jesse brought all his sons except for David. One by one they passed and Samuel did not approve of them. Then when David was brought to him, "the Lord said to Samuel, '**Do not look on his appearance... the Lord sees not as man sees: man looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart.**'" (1 Samuel 16:7ESV) The reason God chose David was because his heart was right with God. "**The LORD has sought out a man (David) after his own heart.**" (1 Samuel 13:14)

3. Pure Heart

Jesus is interested in heart diagnosis. If you ask me, he is the best HEART doctor.

Why? Do our hearts need fixing?

Jeremiah says:

The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it? (Jeremiah 17:9ESV)

Last week we spoke about mercy. Jesus knew about the hearts of the people. Matthew 23: 13-28 ("Woe to you Hypocrites...")

Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint and dill and cumin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faithfulness. 23

Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you clean the outside of the cup and the plate, but inside they are full of greed and self-indulgence.25

“The heart is what you are, in the secrecy of your thought and feeling, when nobody knows but God.”³ Always remember, humans look at the outside, but God looks at the heart.

Jesus is interested in your heart. Jesus is not just a moral teacher who came to teach us some moral good principles. He came to **change our heart**, to **transform our heart to purity**.

David in Psalm 24 says:

Who shall ascend the hill of the LORD?

And who shall stand in his holy place?

**⁴He who has clean hands and a pure heart,
who does not lift up his soul to what is false
and does not swear deceitfully. (3-4)**

As you see, for David, the pure hearted is the person who is not false, someone who believes in the truth. No wonder truth makes us free, as Jesus said. The pure in heart do not go after idols which are deceitful. They do not have a divided self or have divided devotions. The Lord is their God.

Who can be so perfect like this?

We should not take any beatitude alone. The eight beatitudes are not for eight separate people. One person will have those beatitudes.

The key is to enter the Kingdom of God.

They key is having Jesus as your Lord and King.

“When Jesus moves into our lives, all eight of these characteristics begin to emerge in a person’s life. And, so, we can use the other Beatitudes to help us understand each specific one. In addition, the order of the Beatitudes is not

arbitrary. The order is intentional. If Jesus began with purity of heart, it would crush us. But, he doesn't. He begins with poor in spirit. ⁴

-The pure in heart are not perfect; they are poor in spirit. They know that desperately they need Jesus.

-The pure in heart are not perfect; they are mourning for their sins. They are desperately in need of Jesus to save them.

-The pure in heart are not perfect; they are meek and try to live God-controlled lives where God controls their mind, soul, heart....

-The pure in heart are not perfect; they are hungry and thirsty for righteousness. They will be satisfied only by Gods' righteousness, having right relationships with God and humanity.

-The pure in heart are not perfect; they are merciful, because they accepted the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ in their heart.

Purity of heart is not automatic. It is what Christ can do in our mind, soul, heart, in our being.

From our side, it is a decision to be loyal to God. In Psalm 24, David was saying, "Follow the true God, not idols, or false gods." James continues the same thought:

Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. (James 4:8 ESV)

We should decide to **live in one allegiance**. "Decide whom you will worship," as Joshua would say. Therefore love God with all your HEART, MIND and SOUL.

4. They will see God.

Who can see God?

In the OT, it was forbidden to see God. There are some incidents, like Jacob wrestled with God and lived (Gens 32). Moses spoke to God face to face. I wonder what Moses saw? (Numbers 12:7-8) Yet in another incident God did not want Moses to see His face.

“you cannot see my face, for man shall not see me and live...and you shall see my back, but my face shall not be seen.”(Exodus 33:20-23)

In the New Testament we see Philip asked Jesus to see the Father. **“Have I been with you so long, and you still do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? (John 14:9 ESV)**

Paul says about Jesus: **“He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.” (Colossians 1:15 ESV)**

Since Christ’s ascension we have been living the post-resurrection days, and we will see him again in his Second Coming. One day, we will see God face to face. Meanwhile, we live by faith not by sight, as Paul puts it.

So what is face of God today? What is face of Jesus today?

Mother Theresa believed one could see Jesus in the poor, the oppressed, the neglected. She said: “Each one of them is Jesus in disguise.” “If you can't feed a hundred people, then feed just one.”

Jesus took the children and blessed them, and loved them. He said, “Whoever welcomes one of these little children in my name welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me does not welcome me but the one who sent me.” (Mark 9:37)

He also said: “For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me.....Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink?Jesus said: ‘Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.’”(Matthew 25:35-42ESV)

Where do we see the face of Jesus? Where do we see the face of God?

The “children” represent the weak ones, the ones who do not have a voice. The poor, the neglected, the oppressed, the refugees...

Some people look at them and just see people who are marginalized.

Others, who have a pure heart through Christ, can see Jesus in those people.

What do you see? How is your heart?

Application:

1. Ask God to diagnose your heart.

Like in Psalm 139

Search me, O God, and know my heart!

Try me and know my thoughts!

**And see if there be any grievous way in me,
and lead me in the way everlasting!**

2. Surrender to Jesus

You are not perfect and cannot be perfect, only Christ is perfect. Allow Jesus to be your King, Lord, Savior, also the Lord of your heart. Give yourself to Him, your life, your time, your pocket, your money.

3. God is the center of your heart

Let me finish with this illustration:

There is a conversation that I want to read to you between St. Francis and another monk named Leo that captures what I have been saying.

They're walking along the road and Francis recognizes that Leo is depressed, so he says to Leo, 'Leo, do you know what it means to be pure in heart?'

Leo says: 'Of course. It means to have no sins, no weaknesses, no faults to reproach myself for.'

Francis replies: 'Aha. Now I know why you're depressed Leo. We will always have something to reproach ourselves for.'

Leo: Right- that's why I despair at ever arriving at purity of heart.

Francis says: Listen carefully Leo – don't be so preoccupied with the purity of your heart. Turn and look at Jesus. Admire him. Rejoice that he is what he is: your brother, your friend, your Lord, your Savior. That, little brother, is what it means to be pure of heart. And, once you turn to Jesus, don't turn back and look at yourself. Don't wonder where you stand with him. Focus your vision outside yourself on the beauty, grace and compassion of Jesus. The pure in heart praise him from sunrise to sundown, even when they feel broken, feeble, distracted,

insecure and uncertain. They are able to release it all into his peace. It is enough that Jesus is Lord. ⁵

1. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Heart_\(symbol\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Heart_(symbol))

2. Greek Lexicon

3. John Piper, *Blessed Are Pure in Heart*, Mar. 2, 1988

4. Shawn Reese, *The Blessed Pure*, Living Right – side Up in an Upside –Down World.

5. *ibid*