

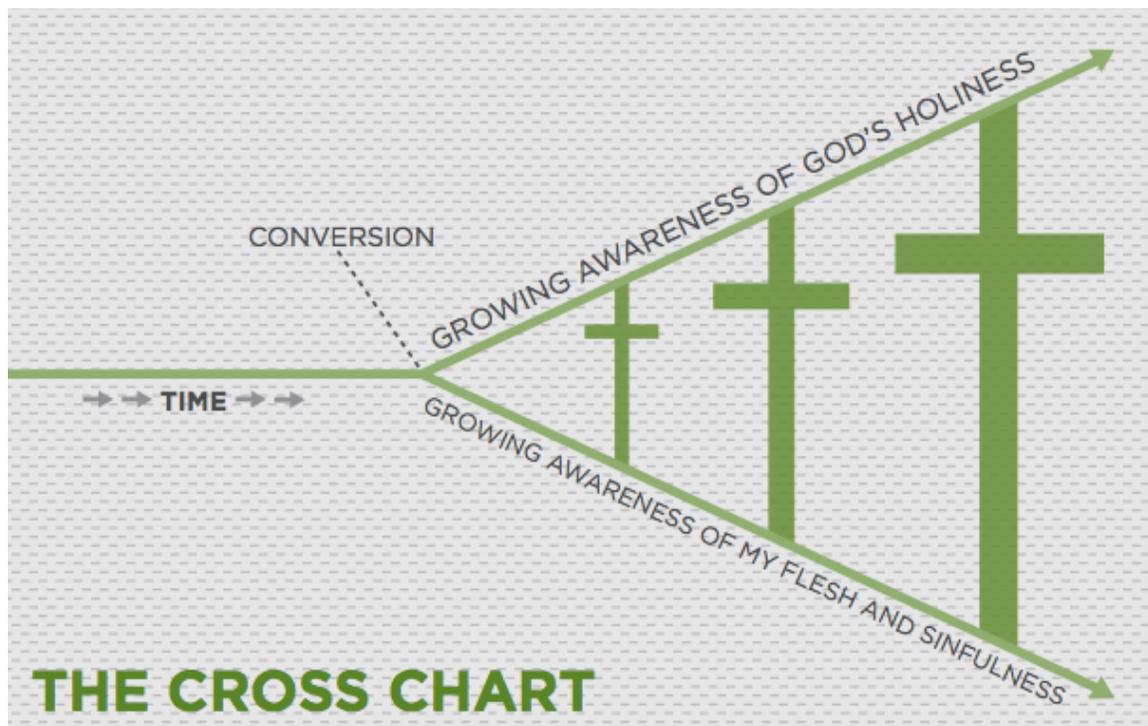


Blessed Are The Pure In Heart

I. INTRO

A. We are in a study of the Beatitudes, which are found in Matthew's Gospel Chap 5.

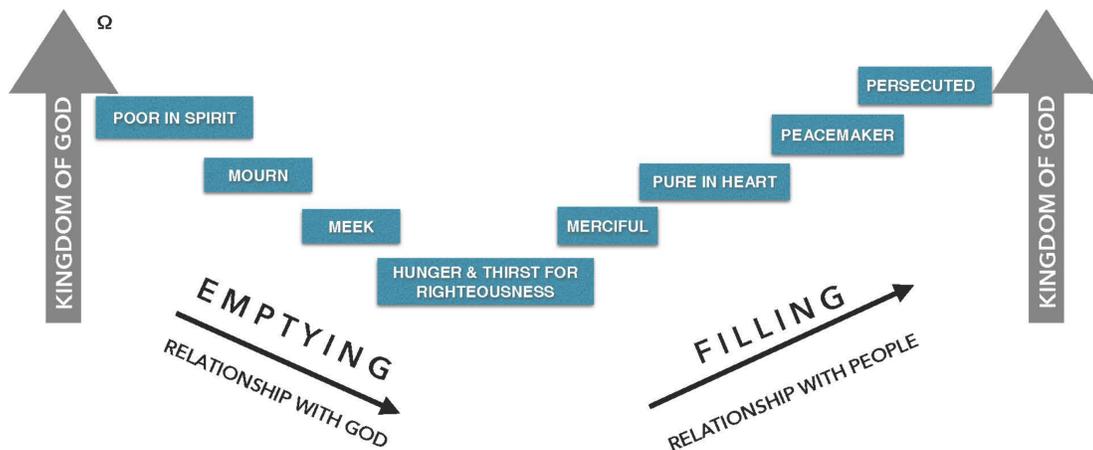
1. We have titled our series **Red Ink: The Unlikely Route To Joy**. Here's why...



2. Normally we wouldn't associate a growing awareness of our sinfulness with joy...
 - a. Yet notice how the cross (as a *gospel* summary statement) becomes a bridge to a growing awareness of God's majesty, beauty, and holiness.
 - b. It is as we learn to live in this tension that joy begins to take up residence in our soul.
 - c. What is joy? My favorite current description is: A calm residential delight deep in our soul, regardless of our circumstances.

Copyright © 2015 Gregg Caruso, King's Harbor Church. All rights reserved. We encourage you to use and share this material freely—but please don't charge money for it, change the wording, or remove the copyright information.

3. What Jesus is saying as He comes on the scene is that He is establishing a **revolutionary** and **subversive** government called the Kingdom of God, here on the earth, which can only be seen with the eyes of faith. And the SOTM, including the Beatitudes, are His **manifesto** (a strategic, usually political, declaration).
4. What Jesus is saying in the Beatitudes is when we stop pretending that we have it all together and own up to the self-centeredness that is at the core of our being, a transformation can begin to take place...



- a. **Poor in spirit:** Admitting I do not have the spiritual resources necessary to carry out God's will and requirements.
- b. **Mourn:** Sorrowful repentance over both the selfish corruption in my own heart as well as the corruption in the broken world around me.
- c. **Meek:** Strength under the control of the Holy Spirit, positioning us as a humble/d learner (disciple = learner)
- d. **Hunger and thirst for righteousness:** An ongoing pattern of intense desire to conform to God's will
- e. **Mercy:** Compassion in action, applied to ourselves and to those we encounter

II. BODY

- A. Now we are ready to consider our passage for today: *“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God”* --Matthew 5:8 [pray]
- B. To see, or encounter, God is the **ultimate goal of every religion**.
1. It would be natural to think this Beatitude should come at the beginning of the list. Yet it is not at the beginning, it's not at the end, it's not even in the middle. What's up with that?
 2. The first three Beatitudes are concerned with a deep awareness of our need. THEN we become hungry and thirsty to know, to love, and to please God -- which then leads to the fruit of directing our many appetites toward God: first mercy, then purity, then peace.
- C. The first thing we learn from this beatitude is that Motive Matters.
1. Jesus is concerned with the inner motivations of our heart. He is saying it is not enough to try and clean up our act on the outside.
 2. The aim of Jesus Christ is not to simply reform the manners of society but to transform sinful, yet repentant people – from the inside out.
 3. *“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. ²⁶ You blind Pharisee! First clean the inside of the cup and the plate, that the outside also may be clean”* -- Matthew 23:25-26
- D. I'd like to ask an answer two questions of this Beatitude today:
- 1. What does it mean to be “pure in heart”?**
 - 2. What does it mean to “see God”?**
- E. **What does it mean to be “pure in heart”?** (We'll look at the word “pure” then the word “heart”)
1. Let's first consider what it means to be “pure.”
 - a. As has been the case, we must first consider what it is NOT saying.
 - 1) It's easy to think verse is addressing sexuality and sensuality, which is the normal interpretation of this verse.
 - 2) But that is not what the word “pure” means.

- b. The Greek word for *pure* means, “without mixture,” or “without pollutant.”
 - c. What it’s saying is: Blessed are those who are single minded, whose eyes are focused alone upon God.
 - d. “Purity is not innocence, it is much more. Purity is the outcome of sustained spiritual sympathy with God.” --Oswald Chambers, *My Utmost For His Highest*, March 26.
 - 1) Purity means to have a heart that is increasingly focused on God.
 - 2) The majority of those who have commented on this verse say the idea is singleness of heart, an undivided heart.
 - e. James refers to this when he writes: “*Purify your hearts, you double-minded*” --James 4:8b Our biggest trouble in life is that our heart is **divided**. Jesus is saying we are to get rid of the division that is in our hearts and focus only on one thing.
 - f. Picture a conversation most of us have had where the person you are attempting to speak with is looking all around the room. The person’s heart is divided at it is frustrating for the person who is trying to have a conversation! There is a mixed motivation and focus.
2. Now let’s consider what the “*heart*” is:
- a. In the Bible, the heart is used as a metaphor for the seat, or center, of our **most basic orientation**, our heart reflects our deepest commitments — where we place our **ultimate trust**.
 - b. Here’s the problem: “*The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?*” --Jeremiah 17:9
 - c. And then we read: “*Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life*” —Proverbs 4:23
 - d. The main human struggle is not between the heart and something else, but between forces that tear it in different directions. The great battle is deciding to what your heart’s greatest love, hope, and trust will be directed. –Tim Keller
3. At first glance this is what Jesus is saying: To be pure in heart is to align our lives to focus first and foremost on God.

4. But there is a **deeper meaning** (that holds true for ALL the Beatitudes): We cannot do this in our own strength and power.
 - a. This **beautiful attitude** is beyond our reach.
 - b. The Beatitudes are a call for Israel, the Pharisees – and us, to throw ourselves afresh onto the grace and mercy of God.
 - c. I hope you see what is going on here: God demands what is humanly impossible and then gives it to us by grace through faith – with the accompanying power of the Holy Spirit.
 - d. We cannot become what God has called us to be apart from increasing dependence on the grace of God to do IN us and THROUGH us what we cannot do on our own. That is the response God is looking for in you and me today.

F. What does it mean to “see God”?

1. The prize of this beautiful attitude is an ability to “see God.”
 - a. The word “they” is emphatic and it means “they alone” will see God, no one else will.
 - b. And while this Beatitude has a future focus, it is referring to this present life as well.
 - c. When our heart is pure we will see (encounter) God.
 - d. It is also a **continual seeing** of God. It is possible to see God in this life now.
2. How do we see God now? (At least five ways...)
 - a. We see God in the Scriptures
 - 1) *“Then beginning with Moses and with all the prophets, [Jesus] explained to them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures” --Luke 24:27 [Jesus is the greater Moses]*
 - 2) *“Philip said to Him, ‘Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us.’ Jesus said to him, ‘Have I been so long with you, and yet you have not come to know Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father...’” --John 14:8-9*
 - 3) My *Bible As Literature* professor -- she knew the Bible but

she didn't know the author...

- b. We see God in creation: "Creation was God's first missionary"
We see the footprint and the hand of God in creation.
 - 1) *"The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands. Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they display knowledge. There is no speech or language where their voice is not heard. Their voice goes out into all the earth, their words to the ends of the world"* --Psalm 19:1-4
 - 2) *"Ever since the creation of the world His eternal power and divine nature, invisible though they are, have been understood and seen through the things He has made. So they are without excuse"* --Romans 1:20
- c. We see God in the (sometimes difficult) circumstances of life.
 - 1) *"I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear; but now my eye sees You"* --Job 42:5
 - 2) I'm reminded of the disciples on the Road to Emmaus (Luke 24), the two disciples encountered Jesus and did not recognize Him because they had become so caught-up in the circumstances and anxiety of life.
- d. We see Jesus when we come together with other Christians.
 - 1) *"When He had reclined at the table with them, He took the bread and blessed it, and breaking it, He began giving it to them. ³¹ Then their eyes were opened and they recognized Him"* --Luke 24:30-31a
- e. And when all is said and done We will see God face to face.
 - 1) If we are believers, when we pass from this world at that split second we will know more joy than all of the other accumulated joys throughout our lifetime.
 - 2) *"For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I have been fully known"* --1 Corinthians 13:12
 - 3) *"Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he*

appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is” --1 John 3:2

III. CONCLUSION

- A. As we surrender to the cleansing grace and mercy of God – along with the empowerment of the Holy Spirit the more pure our heart will become.
 - 1. The more our hearts are focused on God, the more our hearts concentrate upon God, and the more single and sincere our heart is – the more we will see God.
 - 2. The purer our hearts are the more attention we pay on God the more we get out of God’s word, the more we get out of creation, the more we get out of our everyday circumstances, and the more we get out of our times together.
- B. The pure in heart see mysteries of grace, mysteries of love and holiness, which are hidden from the eyes of the unclean. --B. C. Caffin
- C. *“For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God” --Ephesians 2:8*