



A New Way III (Matthew 5:8): A Follow-up Discussion Guide

“The Pharisees taught that righteousness was an external thing, a matter of obeying rules and regulations. Righteousness could be measured by praying, giving, fasting, etc. In the Beatitudes and the pictures of the believer, Jesus described Christian character that flowed from within.”

(Warren Wiesbe, The Bible Exposition Commentary: Vol. 1, 21)

In Matthew 5:8, Jesus transforms his listeners’ concept of those worthy to be in God’s presence from those who appear pure to those whose hearts are pure. The religious leaders of Jesus’ day were much like the legalistic, religious “zealots” of our day. Both try to force their version of purity as an external, image-conscious, rule-keeping endeavor. Jesus turns that notion upside down as he makes it clear that only those with their hearts cleaned up and set apart will see God.

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

- 1. Pastor Matt pointed out that a pure heart is both a “morally clean” heart and an “undivided” heart. Look up the following verses and consider how we achieve both so that we can see God work in our lives and in the future:**
 - Deuteronomy 10:16
 - Psalm 24:1-6
 - Matthew 5:20 along with Matthew 6:33
 - Psalm 73:1, 23-28
- 2. To determine how “pure” our hearts are let’s ask the same questions of ourselves that Pastor Matt asked on Sunday:**
 - **Question #1 – What do I permit myself to see, hear, and experience?** (I will not set before my eyes anything that is worthless. I hate the work of those who fall away; it shall not cling to me. A perverse heart shall be far from me; I will know nothing of evil. [Psalm 101:3-4, *ESV*])
 - **Question #2 – In what do I indulge?** (The good person out of the good treasure of his heart produces good, and the evil person out of his evil treasure produces evil, for out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks. [Luke 6:45, *ESV*])
 - **Question #3 – On what do I dwell? Where do my thoughts go?** (Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. [Philippians 4:8, *ESV*])
 - **Question #4 – About what or whom am I passionate?** (Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect, but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own. But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. [Philippians 3:12-14, *ESV*])

***** At the end of the day, a pure heart can only come from and through Jesus Christ. Examine your heart and meditate on David’s plea for a pure heart:**

Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from your presence and take not your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation and uphold me with a willing spirit. (Psalm 51:10-12, *ESV*)

For next Sunday, Read Matthew 5:1-12, focusing on verses 9-12.