

A Pure Heart

Key Verses: I Samuel 16:7; I Kings 11:4; 15:3; I Chronicles 28:9; II Chronicles 16:9; Psalm 51:17;; Proverbs 4:23; 22:11; Jer 29:13; Ezekiel 14:3; 33:31; Matthew 15:8; Luke 6:45; Eph 6:5-9; James 1:8; 4:8.

Introduction:

1. Studying David provoked much meditation on this man after God's own heart (I Sam 13:14; Act 13:22).
2. My pastoral goal is to perfect you at the highest level in preparation for meeting Jesus Christ (Col 1:28).
3. The greatest love and goal we can have for spouses, family, and church is their pure heart before God.
4. If you have not been like David, then you may want to set Josiah as your example (II Kings 23:25).
5. Very few will hear a study like this; fewer will be convicted by it; and only a precious few will seek it.

I. A PURE HEART IS THE KEY

- A. Let us define the heart as the seat of the affections and the moving decision-maker.
 1. We make choices according to our heart (Prov 16:23; Exodus 35:5,21,26,29).
 2. And we can choose to set our heart's affections (Prov 23:19; Colossians 3:2).
 3. Total depravity is not the lack or death of intellectual ability, but rather the loss and death of all affection and desire toward God, righteousness, and His Word.
 4. A pure heart has undivided affection at the highest level of fervency for God, righteousness, and His Word.
- B. The Lord sees all that is in our hearts, so we cannot hide (Hebrews 4:12-14; Revelation 2:23; Jer 17:10; Psalm 7:9; 44:21; 139:4; Proverbs 15:11; 17:3; 21:2; I Kings 8:39; Luke 16:15; I Chron 28:9; Acts 1:24; 15:8; Romans 8:27; I Thessalonians 2:4).
- C. If we regard iniquity in our heart – allow sin there unconfessed, He will not hear (Psalm 66:18; Proverbs 15:8,29; 21:13; 28:9; Isaiah 1:15; 59:1-2; John 9:31; Job 27:8-9).
- D. But God does hear prayers of sincerity from the heart (Dan 10:12; Jer 29:13; Deu 4:29).
- E. Our Lord condemns hearing (James 1:21), believing (Jas 2:19), and/or talking (I Jn 2:4) as inadequate. We must love Him in our hearts and bear fruitful works by this love.
- F. Vain religion is thinking you are doing fine without bearing unfeigned fruit (Jas 1:26).
- G. Great men recognize this priceless asset and fruit as proving great goodness (Pr 22:11).
 1. This proverb was fulfilled perfectly in Jonathan's love of David (I Samuel 18:1).
 2. Pureness of heart and the love of it leads to gracious speech (Matthew 12:34).
 3. We can judge the hearts of others by their words and actions easily (Luke 6:45).
 4. Great men despise those with a perverse heart (Prov 12:8; 10:20; I Chron 15:29).
 5. Those with evil eyes and hearts are to be avoided (Proverbs 23:6-8; 25:5).
- H. The wise man asks his son for his heart, as this is the key to his salvation (Prov 23:26).
- I. We are to do everything heartily, as to the Lord, for He requires our hearts (Col 3:23).
- J. The LORD will be strong for them whose heart is perfect toward Him (II Chron 16:9).
- K. The most glorious women, in God's sight, are those with hidden pure hearts (I Pet 3:4).
- L. The Holy Ghost blessed the early church with a collective pure heart (Acts 2:46).
- M. God judges those with idols in their heart, who choose stumblingblocks (Eze 14:3-4,7).
- N. Can we make Hezekiah's claim of walking before God with a perfect heart (Is 38:3)?
- O. A merry heart can change your life (Proverbs 17:22; 15:15,13; 14:30; Psalm 97:11).
- A. A man's life depends on his heart, for this is where success or failure begins (Pr 14:14).
- B. Drawing nigh to God requires a true heart in full assurance of faith (Hebrews 10:22).
- P. Advancement in general is a reflection of the heart (Proverbs 11:29; 22:11; 25:3).

- Q. God will reward every man according to his heart (Deuteronomy 5:29; 29:14-28; 30:9-10; Pro 11:20; 6:16-19; Psalm 18:26; 73:1; 36:10; 24:3-6; 15:1-5; 7:10; 125:4; II Chron 6:14,30; 16:9; I Kings 11:9; 8:23; 2:4; I Samuel 7:3).
- R. Don't follow the Lord with imperfect hearts (II Chr 25:2; 19:9; 16:9; II Kgs 10:29-31).
1. There are those who are fools and never think about God in all their thoughts.
 2. There are those who are called Christians by others, without any such evidence.
 3. There are those who call themselves Christians, without any such evidence.
 4. Some attend Christian churches grudgingly out of social or family obligation.
 5. Some attend Christian churches cheerfully out of a partial heart and long habit.
 6. Some attend Christian churches with commitment to usually do what is right.
 7. Some attend Christian churches with a perfect heart directing all their actions, and it is this highest level of faithfulness and zeal to which we aspire.
- S. A perfect heart can even cover sins of ignorance or neglect sometimes (II Chron 15:17; I Kings 14:8; 15:14; I Samuel 12:20; Genesis 20:5-6).

II. A PURE HEART AND HYPOCRISY

- A. A hypocrite has a double heart – trying to be religious and yet loving the world and sin.
1. He will expound great obligations for true religion, but he will not do them.
 2. He will make the greatest appearance of religion in public, yet with an evil heart.
 3. He will be partial in the word of God in order to accommodate his duplicity.
 4. He will be lukewarm in his devotion to the Lord, for his heart has other interests.
 5. He will focus on the external, scandalous, and visible, yet ignore the spiritual.
 6. Men are hypocrites by choice, example, training, doctrine, and judgment.
 7. Much of the Bible combats this popular error of being religious while hiding sin.
- B. Jesus warned over and over against the most conservative sect of the Jew's religion.
1. He repeatedly condemned the hypocrisy of the Pharisees (Matthew 6:2,5,16; 15:7; 16:3; 22:18; 23:13-15,23,25,27,29; Luke 11:44; 12:1,56).
 2. He hated the religion of the lips without a pure heart (Matt 15:1-20; 23:1-33).
 3. Carnality with hypocrisy is a two-edged sword to destroy souls; and it is, as prophesied, a very popular form of "Christianity" in our world (II Tim 3:1-5).
- C. Pharisaical hypocrisy was mainly two-fold: ceremonial religion and categorizing sins.
1. They talked the talk, attended the assemblies, and wore the robes, but little else.
 2. They worried about what went in a man rather than what came out (Matt 15:11).
 3. They paid tithes of the smallest herbs, but neglected true religion (Matt 23:23).
- D. Jesus directly attacked their categorizing sins in His Sermon on the Mount (Matt 5-7).
1. This simple sermon of heart purity is not understood by most Christians today.
 - a. They think Jesus is overthrowing the Old Testament for the Millennium.
 - b. When He in fact defends it against the Pharisees' false interpretation.
 2. Observe how Jesus went after two of the most scandalous sins men simplify.
 3. First, He attacked their false concept and hypocrisy of murder (Matt 5:21-26).
 - a. Murder does not need shedding blood – anger without a cause is enough.
 - b. Murder does not need shedding blood – ungodly name-calling is enough.
 4. Then He attacked their false concept and hypocrisy of adultery (Matt 5:27-32).
 - a. Adultery does not need sex with another – for the thought is enough.
 - b. Adultery does not need sex with another – for false divorce is enough.
 5. If you study further in this sermon, you will see more examples of the same.

- E. Consider a few examples of comparable sins and how our hearts defend Pharisaism.
1. Not giving financially what the Lord expects is the same as robbery (Mal 3:8).
 2. Jesus ranked personal mercy higher than sacrifice and tithes (Matt 12:7; 23:23).
 3. Denying your spouse sexually is defrauding, as is adultery (I Thes 4:6; I Co 7:5).
 - a. But you will never see or hear equal venom against this common sin.
 - b. Many Christians intentionally and often neglect their spouses sexually.
 - c. One is omission and the other commission; and invisible and visible.
 - d. Yet the whitewashed sin is covenantbreaking, without natural affection, unmerciful, hateful, and so forth; all of which carry the death penalty.
 4. Rebellion is like witchcraft, and stubbornness is like idolatry (I Samuel 15:23).
 5. Covetousness is idolatry, according to the inspired words of Paul (Col 3:5).
 6. What about the O.T. death penalty? Do you think it shows God's seriousness about sin? Then check out setting light by your parents (Deut 27:16)? Why are so many comedies, jokes, jabs, and allowances made for joking about parents?
- F. Consider Paul's list of sins where it is easy to see only one of them (Romans 1:18-32).
1. We focus on sodomy, when God judiciously turns men over to reprobate minds.
 2. We then might be able to see murder, fornication, unrighteousness, wickedness, inventors of evil things, covenantbreakers, and haters of God as scandalous sins.
 3. But how often do we miss, underestimate, or minimize malignity, whisperers, deceit, backbiters, debate, envy, spiteful, maliciousness, pride, covetousness, boasters, without understanding, without natural affection, implacable, and unmerciful? Why can we so easily ignore these verses to ridicule sodomy?
 4. Let us teach our hearts the truth – these sins are all worthy of death before God.
 5. And the final verse warns against even compromising with such sinners (1:32), which is why David was so opposed to such people in his house (Ps 101:2-8).
- G. Paul lists sins of carnal Christians in the perilous times of these last days (II Tim 3:1-5).
1. Do we truly hate . . . loving ourselves, being covetous, boasters, proud, unthankful, unholy, traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasure, and weak religious formality? For this peril is not easily avoided and defeated.
 2. Paul's warning here emphasizes the vulnerability of women to this hypocrisy.
- H. Pharisees further define sins by their own depraved hearts rather than God's holy word.
1. What is pride? A man saying, "I know what I am talking about," when he is teaching God's word? Absolutely not! Elihu spoke this way emphatically. What about Jesus (Mark 11:33), John (Matt 3:7), Paul (I Cor 15:10), David (II Sam 6:21), or Joshua (Joshua 24:15)!
 2. What is humility? A man hanging his head, talking very slowly, and wanting to tell you often that he knows nothing? No Bible preacher ever acted like that at all! Humility is trembling before the word of God and doing it, not before men!
- I. Hypocritical hearts in the Lord's people are not new at all (Ezek 33:31; Isaiah 58:1-7).
1. Men may not see it, but it will be seen and judged (I Tim 5:24-25; I Cor 4:5).
 2. The Lord is able to see past feigned love and purity to our very heart (Jer 3:10).
 3. Ananias and Sapphira conceived wicked hypocrisy in their hearts (Acts 5:3-4).
- J. A double heart is a horrible evil (Psalm 12:1-2; Jas 1:8; 4:8; I Chr 12:33; Matt 6:19-24).
- K. An evil heart is known by much talking and negative spirit (Pro 14:33; 6:12-15; 17:20).
- L. A good heart is known by fruit and knowledge it disperses (Luke 8:15; Pro 15:7; 12:23).

III. A PURE HEART IS A DUTY

- A. The first commandment is to love the Lord our God with all our heart (Mark 12:30).
 - 1. Loving God with all our heart leaves no room for competitors or distractions.
 - 2. The heart is known by words, actions, attitude, service, mercy, countenance, etc.
- B. James wrote about purifying our hearts from a double-minded condition (James 4:1-12).
 - 1. He imperatively commands by the Spirit to purify our hearts – so we can (4:8).
 - 2. The danger is having a heart with affections in different (opposing) directions.
 - 3. But it is also having distracting competitors for our affections toward the Lord.
 - 4. He also imperatively commands us to draw nigh to God and cleanse our hands.
 - 5. All the world offers is vanity (emptiness) and vexation of spirit (frustration).
 - 6. Consider 4:4; spiritual adultery = carnal Christianity = double minded heart.
 - 7. Consider 4:6-7; humility is mainly submission to God, so get down before Him.
 - 8. Consider 4:9; we need to be very serious about this matter and afflict ourselves.
- C. Jeremiah warned Judah to wash their heart and end vain thinking (Jer 4:14; Zech 8:17).
- D. Solomon warned emphatically of this serious duty and its consequences (Prov 4:23).
- E. James also wrote about identifying devilish influences in our heart (James 3:14-18).
 - 1. Do not doubt or be confused about this comparison. God is giving you light.
 - 2. Bitterness, envy, and strife are from hell and bring confusion and others sins.
 - 3. Godly hearts are pure, peaceable, gentle, easily intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality or hypocrisy, and sow righteousness by making peace.
- F. We backslide in our hearts, and that is where it all begins (Prov 14:14; Ps 44:18; 37:31).
- G. Our hearts are vulnerable to departing from the living God (Heb 3:12; Deut 11:16-17).
- H. Cursed be the man who puts trust in man and whose heart departs from God (Jer 17:5).
- I. Sinners are to remove the foreskin of their heart by turning to the Lord (Jeremiah 4:4).
- J. A wise man has his heart at his right hand, where he can control it wisely (Eccl 10:2).
- K. Our goal is to please the Lord with our heart, not envious men (I Sam 17:28; Lu 16:15).
- L. Considering all the Lord has done for us should move our hearts for Him (I Sam 12:24).
- M. God's commandments are kept only one way – with all our heart and soul (Deut 6:4-9; 10:12; 11:13,18; 26:16; 32:46).
- N. Even offerings to the Lord must be from the heart (Exodus 25:2; II Corinthians 9:7).
- O. Hearing must be done diligently, lest Satan steal the word (Mark 4:15; Luke 8:12,18).

IV. A PURE HEART CAN BE OBTAINED

- A. Obeying the truth by the Spirit to unfeigned love purifies the heart (I Pet 1:22; Ac 15:9).
 - 1. Righteousness brings confidence of a pure heart pleasing to God (I Jn 3:18-22).
 - 2. The wicked have exercised their heart with covetous practices (II Peter 2:14).
 - 3. Righteousness, faith, charity, and peace are marks of a pure heart (II Tim 2:22).
 - 4. We are to let the peace of God rule in our hearts and to be thankful (Col 3:15).
 - 5. True religion is making melody in your heart to the Lord with great spiritual zeal (Ephesians 5:19; Psalm 108:1; 57:7; 32:11; Colossians 3:16; II Samuel 6:14).
- B. We must incline our hearts to Him (Josh 24:23; Ps 119:112; 78:8; 27:8; II Chron 11:16).
 - 1. We choose to set our affection on things above (Col 3:2; I Chr 29:3; Ps 91:14).
 - 2. Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also (Matt 6:19-24; II Cor 4:18).
 - 3. We cleave to the Lord by choosing with purpose of heart to do so (Acts 11:23).
 - 4. Even our employment duties are to be done from our heart (Ep 6:5-8; Col 3:22).
 - 5. God can't stand a proud heart, and it causes destruction (Prov 18:12; 21:4; 16:5).
 - 6. How is your heart toward the Lord? Noble and great (II Chr 6:8; I Cor 12:31)?
 - 7. Keep your heart the first priority, for the Lord can give a lean heart (Ps 106:15).
 - 8. Some of God's commandments reflect hard hearts we can exceed (Matt 19:8).

- C. Keep your heart with all diligence – fight sin from its beginning in your heart (Pr 4:23).
1. God does not want us deceived: sin begins with lust in our heart (Jas 1:13-16).
 2. Attractive sins must be fought in the heart (Prov 7:25; 6:25; 5:8-12; Job 31:1,9).
 3. Set up reminders, like blue fringes in Israel, to remember the Lord (Num 15:39).
 4. Remember and consider the brevity of life to exercise a wise heart (Ps 90:12).
 5. Jesus Christ is the Revealer of hearts, so love Him and pray for more (Luk 2:35).
 6. Commune with your heart and God in bed (Ps 4:4; 63:6; 77:6; Job 33:14-18).
 7. The Lord must be the sole Portion of our hearts forever (Psalm 73:25-26; 27:8).
 8. Fix your heart securely in the trust of the Lord, so evil tidings will not move you (Psalm 112:7; 62:8; 61:2; 27:14; James 5:8).
 9. A pure heart is a thankful heart that pleases the Lord (Deut 28:47; I Thess 5:18).
 10. A calculating heart – with thoughts of selfishness – is a wicked heart (Deu 15:9).
 11. Sanctify the Lord in your hearts, by exalting and fearing Him alone (I Pet 3:15).
- D. We must teach and train our hearts by dedicated learning and application of Scripture.
1. See the emphasis on God's word for your heart (Deut 4:9-10; 6:4-9; 11:18-23; 17:18-20; 32:46; Proverbs 23:12; 22:17; 18:15; 15:14; 10:8; 7:2-3; 6:20-22; 4:1-7,20-23; 3:1-4; 2:10-19,2; Job 22:22).
 2. Trusting your own heart is dangerous (Prov 28:26; 18:2; 17:16; 15:14; Jer 17:9).
 3. Is God's word the joy and rejoicing of your heart (Jer 15:16; Psalm 119:111)?
 4. Study before answering, for a heart has only foolishness and pride (Prov 15:28).
 5. Trust the Lord with all your heart, and reject your own ideas (Proverbs 3:5-6).
 6. Memorize Scripture for your heart (Psalm 119:11; 40:8; 37:31; Prov 6:20-22).
- E. Since a pure heart is so very important as shown above, we should pray earnestly for it.
1. Beg the Lord to keep it, or you will fail (II Chr 32:31; Pro 16:1; I Kgs 8:57-58).
 2. God can harden our hearts, therefore we should beg Him for mercy (Isaiah 44:18; 63:17; Pr 21:1; 16:1; Psalm 81:12; 141:4; 119:36,32; 10:17; Ezra 7:27; II Chronicles 30:12; I Kings 18:37; I Samuel 10:9,26; Deuteronomy 29:4; 2:30).
 3. Prayers include offering our heart, with request for preservation (Ps 119:10,34).
 4. Speaking of your heart as pure to the Lord is not pride (Job 33:3; Isaiah 38:3).
- F. Sober confession, repentance, and repudiation of all sin is necessary for a pure heart.
1. Prepare your heart by repenting of sins and seeking the Lord (Deut 10:16; Ezra 7:10; II Chron 19:3; 12:14; 20:33; I Chron 22:19; Josh 22:5; 24:23; Zech 7:12).
 2. Examine your heart before Him (Ps 139:23-24; 26:2; 19:14; 17:3; I Cor 11:28).
 3. He clearly knows and remembers sins in your heart (Hosea 7:2; Hebrews 4:12).
 4. True repentance is from the heart (Joel 2:12-13; II Kings 22:19; Ezekiel 9:4; Psalm 51:17; Isaiah 57:15; 66:2).
 5. Don't harden your heart in rebellion (Prov 28:14; Psalm 95:8; Heb 3:8,15; 4:7).
 6. God will not despise a broken and contrite heart (Psalm 51:17; 34:18; Isaiah 66:1-2; 57:15; II Chronicles 34:27; 30:19; 15:15; II Kings 22:19; 20:3).
 7. A woman turned David's heart, but he forsook sin, unlike Solomon (I Kgs 11:4).
 8. David repented quickly to keep a perfect heart (II Sam 24:10,17; Lev 26:40-42).
- G. Every man is responsible for his own heart, then his wife's, and then his children's.
1. Remember David's choice for holy living rejected heart problems (Ps 101:2-5).
 2. Job desired a holy family, so he confessed his sons' sins (Job 1:5; 31:24-28).
 3. Men are to lead wives and children (Genesis 18:19; Josh 24:15; I Cor 14:34-35).
 4. Foolishness is bound in children's hearts, but you can drive it away (Pro 22:15).
 5. Ministers are to take careful heed, but all must guard their hearts (Luke 21:34).
 6. Judgment must be made speedily, lest wicked hearts be strengthened (Ecc 8:11).
 7. Reject those holding positions different than we have learned (Rom 16:17-18).

- H. Churches are to mutually help our hearts (Heb 3:12-13; Pr 27:9; 12:25; II Kings 10:15).
 - 1. Pray for a perfect heart in imaginations and thoughts – for yourself and others (I Chron 29:16-20; I Kings 8:61; Eph 3:14-19; I Thess 3:12-13; II Thess 3:5).
 - 2. We assemble and fellowship to provoke our hearts (Heb 3:12-13; 10:23-25).
 - 3. Crave the courts of God – His assemblies – from your heart (Psalm 84:2,10).
 - 4. Don't be selfish or quiet with your heart, but speak of righteousness (Ps 40:10).
- I. Sobriety and mourning are better for the heart than mirth and laughter (Eccl 7:2-6).
 - 1. Alcohol relaxes inhibitions, which much be used carefully (Prov 23:33; 31:5).
 - 2. Therefore, we make no provision for fleshly levity (Luke 21:34; Rom 13:12-14).
- J. We do not measure by the world's idea of success, or purifying is onerous (Ps 73:13).
 - 1. Don't envy sinners or their lives (Prov 23:17-18; 24:1; Psalm 73:2-22; 37:1-3).
 - 2. Don't let prosperity deceive you (Psalm 62:10; Deuteronomy 8:10-20; 32:15; II Chron 32:25; 26:16; Prov 30:7-9; Luke 21:34; James 5:5; I Timothy 6:6-10).
 - 3. Prosperity should bring repentance and thanks (Act 14:17; Rom 2:5; Deu 28:47).
 - 4. Do not fret against the Lord, for it is the sign of a foolish heart (Prov 19:3; 3:5).
 - 5. Don't let favour or gifts destroy the integrity of your heart (Ecclesiastes 7:7).
 - 6. Keep your heart merciful toward personal enemies (Prov 24:17-18; Matt 18:35).
 - 7. Keep your heart humble – broken, contrite, and poor – as David (Psalm 131:1).
 - 8. Don't let your eyes lead your heart by sight (Job 31:7; Luke 21:34; II Cor 5:7).
- K. Turning our heart to the Lord brings circumcision to perfect us even more (Deu 30:1-6).

Conclusion:

- 1. Our goal is to be like David – whom the Lord loved and confessed had a heart like His own.
- 2. The pure in heart make it to heaven and see God (Psalm 24:4; Matthew 5:8).
- 3. David sinned grievously, but his case was not hopeless at all (Psalm 51:10; I Kings 14:8; 11:4).
- 4. And he prayed for God to unite his heart in one direction in the fear of God (Psalm 86:11-12).
- 5. It is a blessing from God to hear such a message and be moved by such a message. Do something.