

THE ATTITUDE OF LIVING BEAUTIFULLY IN A BROKEN WORLD # 6 Hannah Heather

- Where have you seen God at work in your life this week? (Share any brief examples and encouragements).
- Was there anything from Sunday's message which you found particularly inspiring or challenging?
- Was there anything else you particularly noticed?

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God. Matt 5v8

Just as when Moses saw the not-burning bush and turned aside (Exod 3) and took off his sandals as he was on holy ground, so Jesus' congregation turned aside to hear him and they encountered God. Having a purity of heart sets the scene for an encounter with God.

Prov 4v23 *guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it.* It is the wellspring of life. If a water source is clean, the city will be healthy, if it is dirty, the city will be stagnant and diseased. For us, our heart is the source of all else - our speech, relationships and actions.

Matt 6v22-23 *The eye is the lamp of the body. If your eyes are healthy, your whole body will be full of light. But if your eyes are unhealthy, your whole body will be full of darkness.* What we see affects our hearts.

Don't shut yourself off from the world but shine as lights in the world (John 1v5). Be mindful of what catches your eye. It is easier to see God when we have pure hearts. Jesus extended the OT laws - if you think evil you have sinned. God knows our intentions.

The language of the heart is our whole inner world. (Greeks/Romans thought mind over body, today's culture is not to repress our feelings of who we are. Neither Biblical, not will v emotion). To be truly human we direct our heart toward God. We need relentless pursuit of one thing: all emotion and desire subject to Christ.

Our heart is the seat of deepest commitment, it captures imagination and drives decisions and action. Jesus is not at war with our hearts but for our hearts.

Two distinctions for the Pure in Heart: 1. Being saved - washed white, sin removed, forgiven, reconciled to God, pure in Jesus; 2. Ongoing salvation by Grace, battling temptation, making costly, regular sacrifice, curbing our appetite for the world, wanting to see God by reordering our lives.

What's our appetite? More of God? Develop a steady trend of changing our behaviour: What do we watch? How do we respond to poor conversations? Attitude toward money? Purity is not about earning but appetite. *The life of sensation is the life of greed; it requires more and more. The life of the spirit requires less and less; time is ample and its passage sweet.* Annie Dillard

We can't earn our way to deeper encounter with God but we can train our eyes away from that which dulls our senses and destroys our soul and blinds our eyes from seeing God. Augustine: *"Our hearts are restless until they find rest in Him."* (Think of a young child snuggling close to parent and finding sleep).

"God has so made man's heart that nothing can ever fill it but God himself." CH Spurgeon. How? Watch your appetites, guard your eyes, protect your thoughts. (You can't stop thoughts coming, but you can choose which ones to develop just as you can't stop a bird landing but you can stop it building a nest). Phil 4v8: *whatever is true, noble, right, pure, lovely, admirable ... think about such things.* The goal is Love (1Tim 1v5), with us shining as stars (Phil 2v15).

The opposite to purity of heart is pride, which says "I don't need God." If we feel dirty, and we've turned aside we've met the conditions for becoming pure in heart. God's scandalous grace welcomes us. Theologian C Barth defined God as "The one who loves." The pure in heart are those who love God back.

- How can we develop an attitude of purity of heart?
- What do we think about pride being the opposite of purity of heart? Are there other characteristics?
- Compare the quotes of [Annie Dillard's](#) and [Spurgeon's](#) - how does this reflect our experience?
- How can we protect our minds from intrusive thoughts? (Think about the image of a bird landing and building a nest).
- Consider spending a bit of time thanking God for his "scandalous grace"

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