

## "Pure in Heart"

Have you wondered what happened to people's desire to be chaste and pure? Hello, I'm Phil Sanders, and this is a Bible study "In Search of the Lord's Way." And today we're going to explore what it means to be pure in heart. Stay with us.

Welcome to In Search of the Lord's Way! We're here to search the Scriptures for God's will. More than anything I want to please God and go to heaven. I want to see my Father in heaven who has loved me and sent His Son Jesus to redeem us from sin and give us eternal life. But to have eternal life I must conform to the will of the One who is in heaven, not my own will. Thanks for taking time with us today. We want to be a part of your life each week.

The Lord Jesus said in Matthew 5 and verse 8, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. To have a pure heart means it's not divided or compromised. A pure heart means I haven't mixed God's will with worldly pleasures. Proverbs 16 and verse 2 says that "All the ways of a man are pure in his own eyes, but the LORD weighs the spirit." What you think is pure and what God thinks is pure may be different. And just because you approve of some lifestyle doesn't mean that God approves. Habakkuk 1 and verse 13 says of God, "Your eyes are too pure to approve evil, and You cannot look on wickedness with favor." God isn't like us. We may approve the sins of others, but God cannot. His holy character will not permit Him to approve of sin.

Hebrews 12 and verse 14 says, "Strive for peace with everyone, and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord." The Lord forgives our sins, but He also expects us to forsake our sins and to live holy lives. God didn't forgive our sins so that we could continue living in sin. And unless we strive for holiness, we won't see the Lord. A pure heart leads to a pure life. Are you pure in heart or have you allowed sin into your life?

If you'd like to study more about what it means to be Pure In Heart, we offer this study free. And if you'd like a printed copy or a CD of our study and you live in the United States, mail your request to In Search of the Lord's Way, P.O. Box 371, Edmond, OK 73083 or send an e-mail to [searchtv@searchtv.org](mailto:searchtv@searchtv.org). Or you can call our toll-free telephone number. That number is 1-800-321-8633. We also have materials free online at [www.searchtv.org](http://www.searchtv.org).

The Edmond church will now worship in song, we'll read from 2 Corinthians 6 verses 14 to 18, and we'll explore what it means to be pure in heart.

Our reading today comes from Paul's second epistle to the Corinthians, chapter 6, verses 14 to 18. "Do not be bound together with unbelievers; for what partnership have righteousness and lawlessness, or what fellowship has light with darkness? Or what harmony has Christ with Belial, or what has a believer in common with an unbeliever? Or what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; just as God said, "I WILL DWELL IN THEM AND WALK AMONG THEM; AND I WILL BE THEIR GOD, AND THEY SHALL BE MY PEOPLE. Therefore, COME OUT FROM THEIR MIDST AND BE SEPARATE," says the Lord. 'AND DO NOT TOUCH WHAT IS UNCLEAN; And I will welcome you. And I will be a father to you, And you shall be sons and daughters to Me,' Says the Lord Almighty." That's such important and good teaching from the Word of God to remain pure. Let's pray together. Father we're grateful for Your word that teaches us what we need to do and what we need to avoid. Father may Your will be done on earth, by all of us, just as it's done in heaven.. In Jesus name we pray, Amen!

A person who is "pure in heart" is single-minded about God and doing His will. He wants to do what is right and avoids doing what is wrong. He distinguishes the good from the evil, the right from the

wrong, the truth from a lie, and what builds up from what tears down. He takes seriously what God commands, because of his love and devotion to God himself. He doesn't want any sin barrier to break his relationship with God. You see, sin offends God and separates us from His grace. Isaiah 59 verses 1 and 2 says, "Behold, the LORD's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save, neither his ear dull, that it cannot hear; but your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, and your sins have hidden his face from you so that he does not hear." My friend you cannot expect God to bless you if you cherish your sins. Psalm 68 and verse 18 says, "If I had cherished iniquity in my heart, the Lord would not have listened."

Now if we keep on sinning, we cannot presume the grace of God will still cover our sins. Paul asked the Romans in Romans 6 verses 1 and 2 "What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it?" God's grace and forgiveness is a precious gift that came at a great cost. God forgave us so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. Now continuing to sin shows that we have forgotten the cross. Continuing in sin after we become Christians puts our souls back into peril.

Romans 8 verses 12 to 13 says, "So then, brothers (he's speaking to Christians), we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live (after, or) according to the flesh. For if you live according to the flesh you will die (and he's talking spiritually), but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live." The Scriptures get even more specific in Hebrews 10 verses 26 to 31, "For if we go on sinning deliberately (willfully) after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a fearful expectation of judgment, and a fury of fire that will consume the adversaries. Anyone who has set aside the Law of Moses dies without mercy on the evidence of two or three witnesses. How much worse punishment, do you think, will be deserved by the one who has trampled underfoot the Son of God, and has profaned the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and has outraged the Spirit of grace? For we know him who said, 'Vengeance is mine; I will repay.' And again, 'The Lord will judge his people.' It's a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."

Many Christians today are not serious about their faith but are Christians in name only. They'll tell you they believe, but their behavior hardly differs from the world. Though they wear the name of Christ, they actually cause others to blaspheme Christianity. You can't flirt with lust and sin, and it not hurt you. Sin can not only overcome you, it can harden your heart, destroy your faith and end your love for God. Hebrews 3 verses 12 to 13 says, "Take care, brothers, lest there be in any one of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God. But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called 'today,' that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin."

So, we have to ask, what can we do to keep ourselves from getting overcome by sin and then lose our souls? Well first, we've got to watch over our hearts. Proverbs 4 and verse 23 says, "Watch over your heart with all diligence, For from it flow the springs of life." Well why is the heart so important? Well the Lord Jesus said in Matthew 15 verse 19 "For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false witness, slander." Choices begin in the heart; and people choose what they want to do and what is important to them. When people choose to sin, their hearts can lie to them. Their hearts may say, "well it's no big deal," "no one will get hurt," "it's only once," or "no one will find out." But sin is so deceptive and destructive by its very nature. And that's why God urges us and instructs us not to sin. He loves us, God does, and He knows what sin will do to us.

When people give their hearts to sin; they end up corrupting their whole lives and corrupting other people around them. Titus 1 verses 15 to 16 says, "To the pure, all things are pure; but to those who are defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure, but both their mind and their conscience are defiled. They

profess to know God, but by their deeds they deny Him, being detestable and disobedient and worthless for any good deed." Don't ever let sin get a foothold in your life; it'll destroy you. Rather, control your thoughts and focus on God and what is good. Philippians 4 verse 8 says, "Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there's any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things." Focus your heart on God and the good He's doing in your life.

Now repentance is a change of heart that leads to a change of ways. You'll never fully repent until your heart turns against sin and hungers for righteousness. It's not simply that you stop the sin, you don't want to sin anymore! You want with all your heart to love and to serve God. 1 Thessalonians 5 verses 21 to 22 says, "but test everything; hold fast to what is good. Abstain from every form of evil." You must leave the ways of the world to follow Christ in righteousness.

Colossians 3 verses 1 to 4 speaks of this change. It says, "If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, where He's seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on the things that are on earth. For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. And when Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory."

A little bit later in verse 5 he continues by saying, "Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passions, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. And on account of these things the wrath of God is coming. And in these you too once walked, (you lived like that) when you were living in them. But now you must put them all away: anger, and wrath, malice, and slander, and obscene talk from your mouth. Do not lie to one another, seeing that you've put off the old self with its practices and you've put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator." Don't excuse your sin but put it to death. Don't blame someone else; put your sin to death. Don't redefine sin; put sin to death.

Second, pray fervently for God's help. When the apostles at Gethsemane could hardly keep their eyes open, you remember the Lord Jesus said to them in Matthew 26 and verse 41, "Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation. Oh, the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."

We too need to watch and pray that we will avoid the temptations of life. The devil tempted Jesus. And even when Jesus overcame the devil's temptations, the devil was not content to quit tempting Him. Luke 4 verse 13 says, that "When the devil had finished every temptation, he left Him until an opportune time."

The devil attacks us when we're weak or unprepared to resist. James 4 verses 7 and 8 says, "Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded." Some folks are tempted to sin and they flee from God in fear. Hebrews 4 verses 15 to 16 reminds us, "For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in the time of need." If you draw close to God, He will help you through every temptation.

Third, we need to study the word of God diligently. The psalmist asked in Psalm 119 verse 9, "How can a young man keep his way pure? (The answer) By guarding it according to your word." The psalmist then resolved in Psalm 119 verse 11 "I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you." The best way to know God and to know His will is to study His word. God gave us His wisdom in His word to protect us and to guide us.

Romans 12 verse 2 reminds us, "And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove (that is live out and show it's right) what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect." Loving God means loving His will. You'll be happy to live it out in your life if you love Him. And when you live God's way, you'll prove to yourself and to everyone around you that His way is right! The will of God leads everyone to become good and honest and kind. And people want to be around people like that; because they're acceptable. Who wants to be around a drunkard, when he's drunk? Or an angry person when he's angry? A thief when he steals? Or a cruel person when he's mean? God's ways lift up rather than tear down; and that's why we need to study and know God's will. Because His way is truly perfect.

Fourth, we need to flee, flee from sin. Sometimes fleeing is the best thing we can do to overcome our temptations. 1 Corinthians 6 verses 18 to 20 says, "Flee from sexual immorality. Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person sins against his own body. Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body." Today people do everything but flee from sexual sin. Our sex-crazed world has lost the ability to blush or even to feel ashamed. My friend, lust will kill your faith and your love for God and rob you of your soul.

If you want to stop sexual temptation, then avoid anything that promotes it. Put to death any bad habits of watching sexually explicit things on television or on the internet. Stop reading literature designed to inflame sexual passions. Flee the source of your temptations. 2 Timothy 2 and verse 22 says, "So flee youthful passions and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, along with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart." By all means, get involved at a church of Christ that's near you.

Why does all this matter? It matters, because we belong to Christ. We're accountable to God. We've been bought with a price, the precious blood of Jesus Christ. Paul said in Galatians 2 and verse 20, "I've been crucified with Christ. It's no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." Since we belong to the Lord Jesus, shouldn't we serve Him? One day you'll give an account for the choices that you've made, whether you lived a chaste and righteous life or a wicked and indulgent life. Are you living a life devoted to God or one polluted by the sins of the world?

If you follow the world rather than Christ, you will undoubtedly have to give an account for your sins. Why not change the direction of your heart and your life? Die to sin and live for God. There is no other choice if you wish to have eternal life. Let's pray together. Oh Father help us to turn away from sin and to turn to You and to be obedient to Your will. And may Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven every single day in our lives. In Jesus name, Amen!

Romans 13 verses 11 to 14 says, "Besides this you know the time, that the hour has come for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed. The night is far gone; the day is at hand. So then let us cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light. Let's walk properly as in the daytime, not in orgies and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and sensuality, not in quarreling and jealousy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires." None of us is getting any younger. As each day passes we are one step closer either to the end of life or to the second coming of the Lord Jesus.

Now if you've been involved in sinful practices, isn't it time that you woke up and repented? Why would you risk your eternal soul for a brief moment of passion? Remember: "if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live." The Lord Jesus died upon the cross so that you might have the forgiveness of sins; but His grace has some

conditions. You can't continue to live in sin and expect God to save you on the day of judgment. Grace doesn't work that way. Grace teaches us to "to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age" (Titus 2 and verse 12).

Do you need to repent of your ways? Today is the best day to do that. Place your trust in the Lord Jesus, repent of your sins, confess Jesus Christ as the Son of God, and be baptized into Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. Focus your heart on serving the Lord.

We hope that today's study about getting right with God has stirred you to consider your eternal salvation. Now if you live in the United States and you want a free printed copy or a CD of this message, mail your request to In Search of the Lord's Way, P.O. Box 371, Edmond, OK 73083 or send an e-mail to [searchtv@searchtv.org](mailto:searchtv@searchtv.org). Or you can call the Search office toll-free at 1-800-321-8633. Now you can download these lessons or a newsletter online at our website: [www.searchtv.org](http://www.searchtv.org). There's also a schedule of our programs and a map with the location of churches in your area. We also offer free Bible Correspondence courses. Now don't worry, we're not asking for money. We're here to help you get to heaven.

So please get involved with a church of Christ. If you're looking for a healthy, Biblical church home, we'll be happy to help you find one. And if you have a spiritual problem or you want to become a Christian, we'll be glad to talk with you. Now we'll be back next week, Lord willing. So we ask that you keep searching God's Word with us and tell a friend about this program. And as we say from week to week, God bless you and we love you from all of us at In Search of the Lord's Way.