

Detailed Notes: COV007 17.7.20
Pure in heart 2

Dear brethren,

Should we be satisfied if we manage not to be fearful, anxious, worried, learn to keep ourselves occupied, healthy, survive this pandemic? – what many are trying to do.

No. We should look to the Lord to help us to learn what He wants to teach us during this period, and grow in the Lord.

Some may feel Covid19 pandemic threatens our personal spiritual health, well-being and the outworking of church life. We need not feel threatened in this way.

It is important we understand what is vital, essential for spiritual health, well-being and a life truly pleasing to God

- how to be better equipped to go through well the current pandemic and be ready to face whatever the Lord may see fit for us to go through in the future
- at the personal level and for the congregation.

What I have been sharing with you during this period can help us to respond well

- on the basis of what God has revealed in the Scriptures
- and live our lives accordingly.

It is feasible to have an abiding sense of true well-being and security – under all circumstances.

In the last message, I considered with you **a vital area** we must pay attention to if we want to fare well in life, serve the Lord well and live a life truly pleasing to God: **pure in heart.**

Why is it crucial for believers to continually look to the Lord to help us nurture a heart that is increasingly pure in meaning and quality?

Why does the apostle Paul tell us the goal of his instruction is love from a pure heart... **1 Tim.1:5?**

Why does the Lord Jesus tell us: Blessed are the pure in heart: **Matt. 5:8**?

The answer is obvious if we see clearly the scriptural revelation and teaching on this area of truth.

Being pure in heart is of utmost importance.

It is very important and helpful to be deeply impressed with this area of truth.

We've seen:

Biblical revelation tells us:

The heart is the source of the positive and negative moral meaning of our thoughts, words and deeds

- **where purpose is formed and decision made**
- **how we believe and exercise faith**
- **the core centre of man as a moral being**
- **from which flows forth true worship and ministry.**

The **heart** of a person **reveals the real character of the person, and the moral, spiritual quality and meaning in a person's heart defines the person**

- not his wealth, status and accomplishments in society, his physical attributes and talents/capabilities
- what God looks at, looks for in a person
- what we should all the time be concerned about
- in ourselves and what we look for, look at in a person.

The true worth and meaning in a person is the hidden person of the heart - the moral and spiritual state of the person.

The emphasis in the teaching of the Lord Jesus and the Scriptures is the reality in the heart and what proceeds from the heart.

One who is pure in heart is a person whose heart is washed, cleansed and consecrated to God.

Two major aspects

- 1. State of heart:** clean, cleansed, no stain, defilement
- 2. Direction of heart:** intent, purpose, will, what motivates us
 - a heart focused upon/immersed in God and His righteousness, love, light and truth - God's kingdom, God's will and the fulfilment of His purposes - in thought, word and deed – what is good, what builds up
 - oneness of our heart with the heart of God
 - committed to God, God's will and the fulfilment of God's purposes

 - no evil or negative intent
 - not harbouring anything contrary to God's will
 - not tainted by fleshly motives, intent, purpose.

 - **from such a heart will flow forth love, light, and truth** – love, light and truth from a pure heart

Being pure in heart is the foundational basis of a life of spiritual health, growth, witness, fruitfulness, and a meaningful part in participation in the fulfilment of God's purposes.

The Lord Jesus teaches us:

Matthew 5:8

“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

The pure in heart will enjoy God's blessings, approval

- the state of heart important for meaningful appreciation of God and relationship with God
- see God not with physical eyes but spiritual insight
- true knowledge of God – who He is – in the context of meaningful relationship, fellowship with God and worship of God.

I now want to consider further with you **how we can nurture a heart that is increasingly pure in meaning and quality.**

We must take note right from the outset:

It is not possible for man to be pure in heart apart from the Cross and God's gracious working in our lives

- true for non-believers as well as Christians.

Non-believers, before conversion

Ephesians 2:1–3

1 And you were dead in your trespasses and sins,

2 in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience.

3 Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest.

1. State of heart: stained, darkened by sin, walking in sin

2. Wrong direction: not God and His righteousness but disobedience, selfish intent, indulging the desires of the flesh, under the influence of the forces of darkness.

To be reconciled to God, experience salvation, God's renewal, we must respond positively to God working in our hearts to bring about:

1. Change of direction:

- repentance, what we commit ourselves to
- turn from darkness to light, from indulging the desires of the flesh and sin to righteousness and God's kingdom, from self-desires and self-life to God and God's will

2. State of heart: cleansed - by the blood of the Lord Jesus

This was the ministry entrusted to the apostle Paul by the Lord Jesus when He appeared to Paul on the road to Damascus:

Acts 26:15–19

15 “And I said, ‘Who are You, Lord?’ And the Lord said, ‘I am Jesus whom you are persecuting.

16 ‘But get up and stand on your feet; for this purpose I have appeared to you, to appoint you a minister and a witness not only to the things which you have seen, but also to the things in which I will appear to you;

17 rescuing you from the Jewish people and from the Gentiles, to whom I am sending you,

18 to **open their eyes** so that they may **turn** from darkness to light and from the dominion of Satan to God, that they may receive **forgiveness** of sins and an **inheritance** among those who have been sanctified by **faith** in Me.’

19 “So, King Agrippa, I did not prove disobedient to the heavenly vision, (*Paul's ministry*)

Hebrews 10:19

Therefore, brethren, since we have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus,

- forgiveness, no barrier.

After conversion

Need to carry on, maintain and nurture a heart that is increasingly pure in meaning and quality

How?

- 1. By continuing in right direction of heart - immersing ourselves in truth, God and His righteousness**

Philippians 4:8–9

8 Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things.

9 The things you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.

The attitude of heart and approach to life:

With all our heart we seek the Lord, seek to understand, absorb and apply the teaching of the Scriptures and live out the will of God and what God is saying to us

Psalm 119:1–2

1 How **blessed** are those whose way is blameless,
Who walk in the law of the LORD.

2 How blessed are those who observe His testimonies,
Who **seek Him with all their heart.** (*seek God earnestly*)

Psalm 119:9–11

9 How can a young man keep his way **pure**?

By keeping it according to Your word.

(*God's teaching, will, is pure*)

10 With all my heart I have sought You;

Do not let me wander from Your commandments.

11 Your word I have treasured in my heart,

(*precious, value God's instructions, will*)

That I may not sin against You.

Psalm 119:33–34

33 Teach me, O LORD, the way of Your statutes,

(*eager to learn - from the Lord*)

And I shall observe it to the end. (*commitment*)

34 Give me understanding, that I may **observe** Your law

And keep it with all my **heart.** (*commitment*)

2. Maintain clean heart, clean account

- through repentance, confession of sins

1 John 1:9

If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Note:

1. We need not carry the burden of guilt
 - through repentance, confession, forgiveness, we can maintain a clear conscience
2. Acceptable service must flow from pure, clean heart

Hebrews 9:13–14

13 For if the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling those who have been defiled sanctify for the cleansing of the flesh,

14 how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

To maintain a pure heart, it is crucial we maintain a repentant and contrite spirit throughout our time on earth.

→ sensitive to, able to recognise failure

→ acknowledge, repent, ask God for forgiveness → cleansed.

→

love from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith – how we live:

1 Tim. 1:5: But the goal of our instruction is love from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith.

- progressive process of renewal and transformation by the Holy Spirit as we respond positively to what the Lord desires to bring about in our lives

→ increasingly conformed to the image of Christ.

Without purity of heart we cannot have deep fellowship with the pure, holy God - depth of fellowship corresponds with degree of purity of heart.

Blessed are the pure in heart, **for they shall see God**

- this beatitude captures a central truth of the Scriptures
- to truly know God and draw near to Him, we must have clean hands and a pure heart

Psalm 24:3–4

3 Who may ascend into the hill of the LORD?

And who may stand in His holy place?

4 He who has clean hands and a pure heart,

(heart and conduct, outward expressions)

Who has not lifted up his soul to falsehood

And has not sworn deceitfully.

God is light, and in Him there is no darkness.

We are to walk in the light → **fellowship** with God and brethren.

1 John 1:5–7

5 This is the message we have heard from Him and announce to you, that God is Light, and in Him there is no darkness at all.

6 If we say that we have fellowship with Him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth;

7 but if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin.

(such a life is described as ‘walk in the Light’ – yet need for cleansing – because such a life is not perfect – not without failures, stumbling)

2 Corinthians 6:14–18

14 Do not be bound together with unbelievers; for what partnership have righteousness and lawlessness, or what fellowship has light with darkness?

15 Or what harmony has Christ with Belial, or what has a believer in common with an unbeliever?

16 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.

17 “Therefore, COME OUT FROM THEIR MIDST AND BE SEPARATE,” says the Lord.

“AND DO NOT TOUCH WHAT IS UNCLEAN; And I will welcome you.

18 “And I will be a father to you, And you shall be sons and daughters to Me,” Says the Lord Almighty.

What partnership have righteousness and lawlessness?

What fellowship has light with darkness?

We are the temple of the living God...God dwells in us...

Therefore...be separate, and do not touch what is unclean...

- do not let your heart be defiled – keep away from sin.

We will end today's sharing with Paul's exhortation in:

Philippians 2:12–16

12 So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence,

work out your salvation with fear and trembling;

13 for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure.

14 Do all things without grumbling or disputing;

15 so that you will prove yourselves to be **blameless** and innocent, children of God above reproach **in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you appear as lights in the world,**

(Jesus: You are the light of the world – dark, fallen world)

16 holding fast (*margin: Or forth*) the word of life, so that in the day of Christ I will have reason to glory because I did not run in vain nor toil in vain.

We need to be prayerful, vigilant and alert

- because we are living in a fallen world.

The spirit may be willing but the flesh is weak

- we are subjected to many negative influences and temptations, and the spirit of the world is pervasive,
- the forces of darkness are actively at work.

But it is feasible to live an overcoming life – in Christ

- through whom we can maintain a clear conscience.

We must learn to abide in Christ and He in us

- God always leads in triumph in Christ: **2 Cor. 2:14**

Next sharing: the Lord willing, I will consider further with you: having a pure heart is an essential, integral part of faring well in important aspects of our lives – our knowledge of God and relationship with God, the fullness of the Spirit, guidance, effective prayer, readiness to meet the Lord.

In fellowship,
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