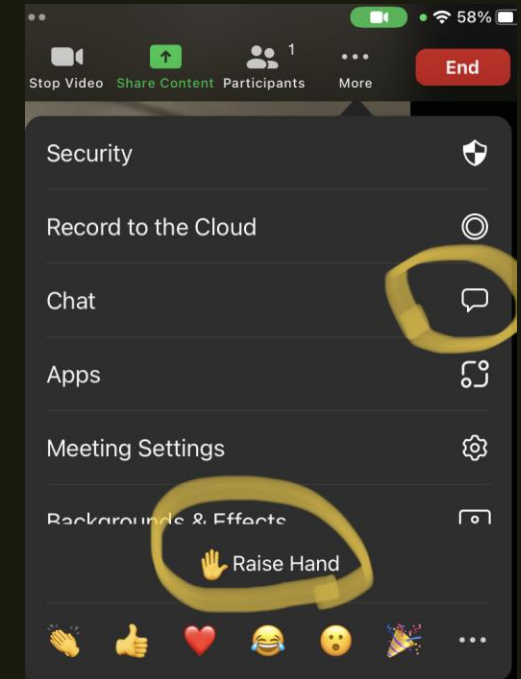
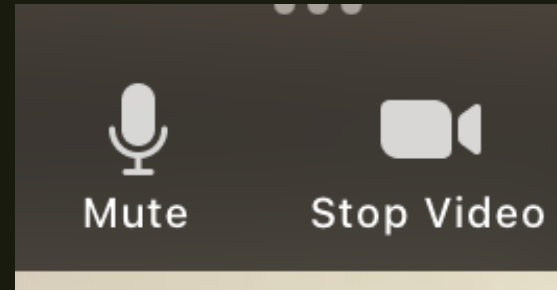




ASKING BETTER QUESTIONS -
THE SERMON ON THE
MOUNT 6

Asking Better Questions

- Don't forget to Mute if you aren't talking
- Questions welcome!
- You can type a question into the chat
- Or Raise your hand.!



**Blessed are the pure in heart, for
they will see God. (Mt 5:8)**



Initial Questions

- What is the *heart*?
- What does it mean to be *pure in heart*?
- What does mean to *see God*?
- What is the connection between the two?
- Anything else?

The heart



- The LORD saw how great the wickedness of the human race had become on the earth, and that every *inclination of the thoughts of the human heart* was only evil all the time. (Gen. 6:5)
- Then Hannah prayed and said: “*My heart rejoices* in the LORD; in the LORD my horn is lifted high. (1 Sam 2:1).
- I will praise the LORD, who counsels me; even at night *my heart instructs* me. (Ps 16:7).
- Scorn has *broken my heart* and has left me helpless; (Ps 69:20)
- For it is from within, **out of a person’s heart, that evil thoughts come**—sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, greed, malice, deceit, lewdness, envy, slander, arrogance and folly. All these evils come from inside and defile a person. (Mk 7:21-23).
- Many more verses (100s). What’s your understanding of the heart?

Pure of heart in the Bible

‘you Pharisees clean the outside of the cup and dish, but inside you are full of greed and wickedness’. They were ‘like whitewashed tombs, which look beautiful on the outside but on the inside are full of the bones of the dead and everything unclean’.

What does Jesus care about?



Pure of heart – awkward questions!

- Purity of heart must never be confused with outward conformity to rules. Because it is the heart which must be pure, this beatitude interrogates us with awkward questions like these: **What do you think about when your mind slips into neutral?** How much sympathy do you have for deception, no matter how skillful? For shady humor, no matter how funny? To what do you pay consistent allegiance? What do you want more than anything else? What and whom do you love? To what extent are your actions and words accurate reflections of what is in your heart? To what extent do your actions and words constitute a cover-up for what is in your heart? Our hearts must be pure, clean, unstained. [Carson]

Purity in the Bible

Who may ascend the mountain of the Lord?

Who may stand in His holy place?

**The one who has clean hands and a pure heart,
who has not set his mind on what is false,
and who has not sworn deceitfully.**

**He will receive blessing from the Lord,
and righteousness from the God of his salvation**

Psalm 24:3–5 (HCSB)

- **What is the Psalmist saying?**
- **What we do (hands), think (mind), say (truth) + motivations and attitudes (heart)**

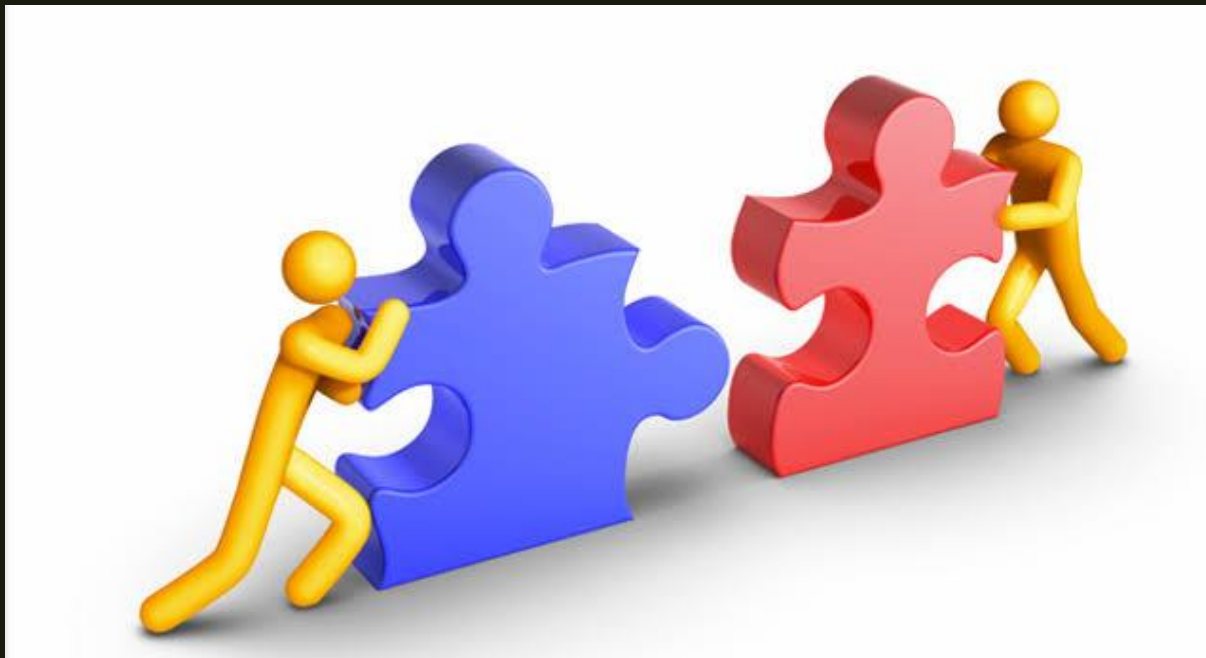
Purity of Heart



- Motivations,
- Attitudes,
- Thoughts,
- Actions,
- Words.
- All aligned.

- Does that say “purity of heart” to you?

How to get a pure heart?



- It's a Partnership!
- You have a part to play.
- God has a part to play.
- Working **together** to form Christ in you and bring a bit more Kingdom to the world through and around you, by your attitudes, actions and words.

How do I get a pure heart? – Our part.

Everyone who has this hope in him [that is, in Christ] purifies himself, just as he is pure” (1 John 3:3).

- Who is the example of purity?
- Whose job is it to become pure?
- What is the motivation to purify oneself?
- What does that process look like?
- Do I think about this?

How do I get a pure heart? – Our part.

- I seek you with all my heart: do not let me stray from your commands. I have **hidden your word in my heart** that I might not sin against you. (Ps 119:10-11).
- But we know that when Christ appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. All who have this hope in him purify themselves, just as he is pure. (1 Jn 3:2b-3)
- Intentional seeking.
- Read, reflect, meditate on Scripture. Starting with Jesus' words.'
- Based on hope of being with Christ. Is this what I want?
- This hope drives the heart desire to purify ourselves.
- We have to want to become pure. This is the key.

How do I get a pure heart? – God’s part.

- For the grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people. It teaches us to say “No” to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, while we wait for the blessed hope—the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and *to purify for himself a people that are his very own*, eager to do what is good. (Tit 2:11-14)
- Grace of God that appeared = Jesus.
- Jesus is God offering salvation.
- Grace teaches us a new attitude to life.
- Jesus’ death redeems us from all wickedness. (From impurity of heart)
- Jesus purifies a people for himself.
- Creates an eagerness to do what is good.

Purity of heart – the Partnership

**Create in me a pure
heart, O God, and renew
a steadfast spirit within
me. (Ps 51:10)**

**God does the actual creating, we just have
to create the space.**



Seeing God

- Knowing himself to be in the kingdom already, he is concerned with purity because he recognizes that the King is pure, and the kingdom in its perfected form will admit only purity. The pure in heart are blessed because they will see God. Although this will not be ultimately true until the new heaven and earth, yet it is also true even now. Our perception of God and his ways, as well as our fellowship with him, depends on our purity of heart. The visio Dei—what an incentive to purity! [Carson]

Seeing God in the Bible

- Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, **when did we see you** hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? **When did we see you** a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? **When did we see you sick or in prison** and go to visit you?’ ‘The King will reply, ‘Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me. (Mt 25:37-40)...
- Does this verse give you another way to think about “seeing God”?
- How is that related to being pure in heart?

Seeing God in the Bible

- **Make every effort to live in peace with everyone and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord. (Heb 12:14)**
- What do we learn from this verse?
- Intentionality is important. Make every effort. What does that mean in practice?
- Relational peace is high on the list! Gets a special mention here.
- “Without holiness no one will see the Lord” = “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.”

What Jesus is promising

Jesus is promising that as we hand over the dark recesses of our heart to Him and his words, he will purify our hearts and give us a clearer and clearer picture of God.

Agree or disagree? Anything else?

In your own words

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

How would you say it in your own words?



Reflection

- Does having a pure heart feel like a desirable thing for me?
- Do I have a clear understanding of the impure things in my heart right now?
- How does the concept of “partnership” feel?
- Has there been progress in developing a pure heart as I reflect on the last 3, 6 or 12 months of my life?