

Blessed Are the Pure in Heart

(Matthew 5:8)

Introduction

Have you ever done something wrong, but kept it a secret? How did you feel inside? Did you feel guilty? If you know you are guilty — if you know you broke a rule and you deserve to be punished — but you keep it a secret, your guilt can make you physically sick. It can give you a headache or make you sick to your stomach. If you don't do something about your guilt, it can make you bitter and angry. Sometimes if you're holding guilt in your heart it can make you cranky. You'll snap at people for no reason at all and it's hard to sleep at night. You'll toss and turn.

What do you think you should do with your guilt? You can't keep it a secret. You have to tell someone. The best Person to tell is God. Then you have to tell your parents or teacher. Once you confess your sin and receive forgiveness for it, you can relax. You'll feel happy again and you can get a good night's rest. We call that having a "*clean heart*."

Opening Prayer

Lord, we want our lives to be shining examples for our friends and family of Your perfect way for us to live happy and fulfilled lives. Teach us this morning how important it is for us to keep our hearts pure. Give us the desire in our hearts to always be well pleasing to You, O Lord. In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen.

Memory Verse

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. (Matthew 5:8)

Lesson

Open your Bible to Matthew 5. We've been studying *The Beatitudes*. Who can remember what a *beatitude* is? A beatitude is

the blessing you get from God when you have the kind of attitudes that please Him. I call them "*Be-Attitudes*" because they are attitudes that ought to be in our hearts. God gives us blessings when we allow Him to control our thoughts and feelings.

The Beatitudes tell us about the kinds of attitudes we should have in order to receive blessings from God — blessings that God gives us when we allow him to control our attitudes. What's an *attitude*? (A way we show people what we're thinking and feeling.) What does the word *blessed* mean? (Happy)

Jesus taught that if we have certain attitudes, we will live a happy and fulfilled life. So, it's important for us to understand what attitudes God wants us to have.

What are the godly attitudes God wants us to have that we've studied so far in *The Beatitudes*?

Review

[Teacher, as you review these verses, have the children observe the text in their own Bibles. Lead them to understand the meaning of the words by asking questions and getting responses from them.]

The **first** beatitude is found in Matthew 5:3,

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

We learned that God is really pleased with us when we know that we are "*poor in spirit*" (that is, we know that we are lost without Jesus). He promises that once we turn to Him to ask Him to forgive us of our sins, we receive the right to go to Heaven when we die. It says, "*for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*"

The **second** beatitude is found in Matthew 5:4,

Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

We learned that this means that we will be truly happy if we are sincerely sorry about our sins. What is the blessing? God comforts us! God promises to forgive everyone who confesses their sins and to restore them to right standing before Him.

The **third** beatitude is in Matthew 5:5,

Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

We learned that we will be truly happy if we become humble and stop trying to be the center of attention. What's the blessing? God promises us "*the earth.*" This is total appreciation for your life here on earth: your health, friends, family, fresh air and sunshine, etc. You see, when we begin to take our eyes off of ourselves, we start enjoying the beauty and the bounty of the earth around us. That's when we get the most out of life and we look forward to being with Jesus in the life to come.

The **fourth** beatitude is in Matthew 5:6,

"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled."

We learned that we will be truly happy if we earnestly desire to do what is right and good. What's the promised blessing in this beatitude? God promises that we shall be filled, that is we will be completely satisfied deep down in our heart and soul. When you sincerely desire to do what is right it gives you a lasting happiness because you know you are in the center of God's will.

The **fifth** beatitude is in Matthew 5:7,

Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.

We learned that we should have compassion towards others. What blessing does God promise us if we are always forgiving and kind to people? We learned that if we show mercy towards others, others will show mercy towards us. Why should we show mercy? (Because God has been merciful to us)

Today we will study the **sixth** beatitude. Who can read Matthew 5:8 for us?

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

If you truly want to be happy in life, you need to understand what God is saying here. What do you think "*pure in heart*" means? (Blameless, guilt free, right motives, without deceit.) God wants us to be innocent of all wrong doing, not to have bad thoughts about people, or to think up ways to be mean to others.

What is the blessing that God promises in this beatitude? (Jesus promises that those who allow Him to cleanse them from their sin *shall see God.*) When this life is over, we will know the perfect happiness of living in God's presence forever. That is an awesome promise. So, we need to understand what Jesus is teaching here.

God desires us to have clean hearts. In fact, it's impossible for us to come into Heaven without clean hearts. God is perfect; He cannot tolerate sin in His presence. But there's a big problem. We are sinners by nature. (Romans 3:23, "*For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.*")

Not a day goes by that we don't do something wrong. Jesus said that if you've ever been angry at someone, it's as if you murdered him in your heart.

Can you clean your own heart? (No!) God knows that we cannot make our own hearts clean (Proverbs 20:9; 1 John 1:7). So, God came up with a wonderful plan — He came to earth in the form of Jesus.

Who knows what He did to solve the problem? (He took our punishment for us.) When Jesus died on the cross, He satisfied God's requirement for us to pay for our sins, so now we don't have to. But in order to receive this wonderful gift of life from God, we really have to believe that Jesus paid the price of our sin in full. Do you? Have you ever asked Jesus to forgive you for your sins? Have you thanked Him for what He did for you? [Lead in sinner's prayer.]

How do you keep your heart pure as you live day-by-day? When you do wrong, confess your sin to God. (1 John 1:9). Stay close to Him by reading His Word and talking with Him in prayer. When your

heart is pure, you will be able to "see" God working in your every-day life.

It is God living in your heart that helps you have all these godly attitudes.

Closing Prayer

Father, when we do something that we know is displeasing to You, we don't want to hold the knowledge of our sin in our hearts. We want to be quick to come running to You to confess our sins. That way we can have clean hearts and we can live happy lives. In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen.

Learning Centers

Craft Corner

Game Center

Use the following questions in a game of your choice:

Review questions:

1. What is the attitude you're supposed to have in today's beatitude? (Pure in heart)
2. What is the blessing God promises if you are pure in heart? (We'll see God)
3. What's a pure heart? (A blameless heart with no wrong intentions, that has good thoughts.)
4. How do you get a pure heart? (Ask God to control your attitudes and to forgive you of your sins)

5. How do you get to Heaven? (Believe that Jesus paid the penalty for my sins.)
6. Can you get to Heaven if you don't believe that Jesus paid with His life? (No!)
7. What is sin? (Doing anything that displeases God)
8. How do you know what pleases and displeases God? (Study the Bible, pray, listen for the voice of God in your heart. The Holy Spirit will lead you and give you directions for life if you learn to listen for His voice. He speaks into your heart.)
9. Can you clean your own heart? (No! Only Jesus can do that!)
10. How do you keep your heart pure as you live day-by-day? (Confess your sin to God.)

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