



THE BEATITUDES PART 4

BLESSED ARE THE PURE IN HEART FOR THEY SHALL SEE GOD. MATTHEW 5:8

Motive means everything to the God who created you. He looks deep within your heart and He knows exactly why you do what you do. In fact, He knows you much better than you know yourself. God is interested in the deepest intentions of your heart.

The world puts all sorts of emphasis on exterior and on image. The world looks at education, your appearance, your haircuts, your makeup, the kind of car you drive, and the kind of house you live in. The world defines you by the exterior and not the interior. Once again, the world is upside down from the way that the Kingdom of God works. The world looks on the outside, but God looks into the deepest recesses of your heart.

Man is interested in reputation. That's how everybody else thinks that you are. But God is interested in your character. That's who you really are.

God is not interested in your achievements, accomplishments, or your acquisitions. God couldn't care less about your image, but He does care about your spiritual health and your heart. He knows the deepest secrets of your soul, and He's interested in the real you. I love that story that I've told you all so many times about when Samuel went to look at the sons of Jesse to find and anoint the King of Israel. Jesse brought all the older, taller, more handsome sons out, but Samuel knew that something was wrong. He asked Jesse, "Do you have another son?" And when young David was brought out, Samuel immediately recognized God's anointed. Samuel said, *"The LORD does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart."* (1 Samuel 16:7b NIV)

Matthew 5:8 is all about the heart. Jesus is saying, "God blesses those whose hearts are pure for they will see God." So what does it mean to be "pure in heart". If God's looking at the heart, what kind of heart does He see as a pure heart? And what exactly does it mean when it says that the pure in heart will "see God"?

I think that the person who has a pure heart is the person who has spiritual integrity. This person with integrity will feel the presence, the power, the purpose, the peace, and the pardon of God.



So what does it mean to have "integrity". God is saying in this verse that "I bless those who have integrity". It doesn't mean you have to be sinless or perfect. It doesn't mean that you don't make mistakes. But it means that you have the right motive going on inside of you; you have integrity.

God is more interested in your attitudes than your actions. We've seen over and over that if you do the right thing for the wrong motivation it has no spiritual value. God is way more interested in the direction of your heart. He wants to know why you do what you do. Integrity has been defined as "what you do when no one is watching". I think that is because when no one is watching, we are doing the things that our hearts seek after. It's kind of odd to think that God said, "David is a man after my own heart." How in the world can this be? David did all kinds of horrible things. He committed adultery with a woman and then he had her husband sent into battle where he would be killed. He lied about it. He tried to cover it up. And yet, God said, "David is a man after my own heart". What in the world did God mean by this? I think God characterized David this way because David truly desired to please God, and when he sinned he was quick to repent and beg for God's forgiveness. I want to have a heart like God, don't you? And I'd rather not have to go through all that horrible stuff that David went through.

I can think of three obvious characteristics of integrity. Remember an integer is a whole number. It cannot be divided evenly. This is also where we get the word integration. That means it's all mixed together as one. It's all part of the same whole. That's how our lives need to be. That is integrity. Those three characteristics are:

Wholeness - your life isn't compartmentalized. Your life is a large integrated whole. It is a picture of unity. It all fits together. This is the person whose family, business, church, secrets, friendships, are all one. They are melded together in a beautiful person of integrity.

Authenticity - that means you're the real deal. You're not a scammer. You're not a pretender. You're not a phony. You are exactly who you appear to be. People with authenticity act the same with whomever they are with.

Unmixed Motivation - you do the right thing, and you do it for the right reason. You are straightforward. You are not two-faced. You are not always angling to get things your way, and doing things for others to "get" something.

As I said at the beginning of this sermon, we are interested in our reputations (that's what everybody thinks we are), but God is interested in character (that's who we really are). The verse for today says that those that have integrity get to be friends with God. The Bible is full of great verses about integrity. Here are a few of my favorites:

Proverbs 11:3 The integrity of the upright guides them, but the unfaithful are destroyed by their duplicity.

Proverbs 11:20 The LORD detests people with crooked hearts, but He delights in those with integrity.

Proverbs 12:22 The LORD detests lying lips, but He delights in people who are trustworthy. (NIV)

Being a person of integrity not only pleases God, but it has some great benefits that go along with it. Here are just a few of the benefits that come with being a person of integrity:

1 **Integrity brings confidence/personal stability** - Trying to be a fake somebody wastes a lot of energy and resources. A person of integrity does not try to be something or someone that he or she isn't. A person of integrity will have deep-seated confidence. When you are a person of integrity others love to be around you because you know who you are. People like to be around someone who knows who they are and who knows where they're headed. It gives a sense of security and safety. How wonderful it is to be yourself! *Proverbs 10:9 People with integrity walk safely, but those who follow crooked paths will be exposed. (NLT)*

I once worked with a person who told a different lie to a different person everytime he got on the phone, and he constantly had to remember what he had said to different people. That is a horrible way to live. Many of you all know my memory isn't that great but because I do make of practice of not lying, I don't have to remember what I've said to people. It will wear you out trying to remember different tales you've told to different people. *Proverbs 11:3 The integrity of the honest keeps them on track; the deviousness of crooks brings them to ruin. (The Message)* Having integrity helps you to stay headed in the right direction. Integrity helps you to see God's plan and purpose for your life. It saves you a lot of wasted steps.

2 **Integrity gives you the opportunity to leave a lasting legacy** - The wonderful legacy you leave will last from generation to generation to generation. Your work will go to someone else. The money you've earned will be spent, but the character that you've lived out during your life will be lived out in others when you are gone. This is a blessing to your descendents.

⁷*When people live good, honest lives, their children are blessed. (Proverbs 20:7 ERV)*

Character is passed on to your children. My dad instructed me to have integrity. He used to say, "If a person will lie to you, they will kill you." That's sort of a shocking thing to say, but that sort of shock pushed any desire to lie right out of my life. At different times in my life my dad was there urging me to be a man of integrity. I remember one time when I felt overwhelmed with my responsibilities as a faithful dad and husband. I told my dad what I was feeling. I told him I just felt like walking away from it and leaving it all behind. His reaction was immediate. "Stay on the path you're on. Don't look to either side. You will never regret doing the right thing!" Now that's powerful. "When people live good, honest lives, their children are blessed." I was blessed by the good honest life that my father and mother lived, and I continue to be blessed by their integrity today.

Some of you all might feel like you've messed up so much that now what you do doesn't matter. Your greatest test is RIGHT NOW. You can show your kids exactly what to do. Today is the first day of your life of leaving a legacy.

3 Integrity brings the blessing of rewards in eternity - In Matthew 25:21 we read, ²¹ *The master answered, 'You did well. You are a good and loyal servant. Because you were loyal with small things, I will let you care for much greater things. Come and share my joy with me.'* (NCT) If the Bible is true, and I believe that it is, there is a reward that will come to those who are good and loyal servants.

Take a look at this verse. The reward is in the small things. It is in the small moments that you show real integrity. It is who you are when no one is watching. We all know we've failed in small areas. Those were paid for on the cross. But every act of integrity no matter how small that you exercise will be rewarded in eternity. Every temptation you withstand will have a reward. (story of Devin and the tin purchase).

So how can you and I live a life that has integrity? Let's get down to the practical. A few weeks ago in the mens' Sunday School class we stumbled upon a beautiful Psalm of David that shows very accurately what a life of integrity looks like.

In Psalm 15:5 David gives us characteristics of a person who has integrity. It is a wonderful check list of the way to live if you want to have a blessed and stable life. He tells you and I exactly how to live a life where we will know the place that God has for us, and will know his plan and His purpose for our lives.

Let's take a minute and see how David describes this person.

¹ LORD, who may dwell in your sacred tent? Who may live on your holy mountain?

David is saying, "Lord who gets to be close to you? Who gets to live in your presence? Who gets to live knowing you intimately? Lord, who is it that gets to know your power and your purpose?"

² The one who walks with integrity, [the same no matter where he/she is]

- (1) does what is righteous, [he/she who does the right thing by other and God]**
- (2) and speaks the truth from his heart. [he/she who is a truth teller - don't lie]**
- (3) refuses to slander others with his tongue, [don't put others down - for politics, race, lifestyle, etc]**

(4) won't listen to gossip will not cast a slur on his/her fellow man

(5) who does no wrong to a neighbor,

(6) and casts no slur on others;

- (7) [instead] honors those who fear the LORD;**
- (8) keeps promises even when it hurts, and does not change their mind;**
- (9) lends money freely (he/she is know to be a generous person and not stingy);**
- (10) he/she cannot be bribed.[he/she doesn't change who they are and how they act to get stuff out of people]**

**Whoever does these things
will never be shaken.**

The man or woman who walks with integrity will walk in safety with security. Integrity is the way to have a life that is "never shaken".

I want to close by giving you three ways that you can begin living a life of integrity today. These are some Biblical suggestions on living the kind of life that will enable you to "see God".

Practical ways to exercise integrity :

- 1) Keep your promises.** People of integrity keep their promises. Prov 25:14
What promises have you made that you have not kept? Broken promises bring bitterness. Start being zealous about the promises you make to others.
- 2) Pay your bills.** The bible says don't spend more money than you make. Don't go into debt for what you can't pay. *Psalm 37:21 The wicked man borrows and never pays back.*
- 3) Refuse to gossip.** This is relational integrity. Don't share gossip and don't listen to gossip. Some people love to share secrets they learn about others because it somehow makes them feel more important. But do you know what? A gossip's reputation will fall a little bit with every juicy tid bit they share about another. *Proverbs 11:13 A gossip can't be trusted with a secret, but someone of integrity won't violate a confidence.*

Through the power of the Holy Spirit start today being a person of integrity. That is a person who has a "pure heart". Your life will have so many benefits and the most wonderful thing of all is that you will be on such an intimate basis with God that you will begin to see His hand at work everywhere. You will understand His plan and His purpose for your life.

Let us pray.

Union Grove is one of the oldest Baptist communities of faith in the State of Texas dating back to 1844. Pastor Faber McMullen may be reached by email at uniongrove362@gmail.com or by snail mail at: 15301 FM 362, Navasota, Texas 77868. Tel: 936-825-1227 (Edited and proofed by Amanda Neese- Webster, Texas.) All financial gifts to this ministry are tax-deductible as a 501 (c) (3) Corporation.