

Questions for Your Journal

Use these following questions to evaluate what you learned from Sunday's sermon.

Summary:

- The main thing the speaker wants me to do, be, and/or feel as a result of this message.

Application to My Life:

- What did God say to me through this message?
 - How does my life measure up to this word?
 - What action(s) will I take to bring my life in line with this word?
 - What truth do I need to study further?
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Blessed are the Pure in Heart

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

“In the context of Jesus’ world, the emphasis here affirmed is striking. The psalms do indeed affirm the need for an interior purity—a purity of heart. Psalm 24:3–4 says:

Who shall ascend the hill of the Lord?
And who shall stand in his holy place?
He who has clean hands and a pure heart.

External purity (clean hands) is not enough, it must be accompanied by an internal purity (pure heart). As seen here, both of these aspects of purity were in the tradition available to Jesus. However the developing rabbinic tradition placed a clear emphasis on the first. The Mishnah includes an entire division on the subject titled “**Tōhoroth**” (cleannesses) that continues for nearly two hundred pages and includes eleven tractates. Among the rabbis quoted in these tractates is the great Hillel, who lived one generation before Jesus. Clearly this extended discussion on cleanliness was in process of development in the first century. It includes tractates on vessels, tents, immersion pools and hands, but not hearts. There are three levels of uncleanness discussed, and hands are always on the second and third level. In this case Jesus is not critical of the developing laws on ceremonial purity, but he makes the courageous decision to place his entire emphasis on purity of heart. What then is meant by the heart?

“Søren Kierkegaard, the Danish philosopher-theologian of the nineteenth century, is well known for his argument that the pure in heart are those who will one thing. He recognized the reality that often behind human behavior lies a multiplicity of motives. With the pure in heart, “what you see is what you get,” as the colloquial phrase has it. They have one motive for what they do, and they harbor no hidden agendas.

What is the heart?

“But what exactly is the “heart” in biblical literature? Modern Western culture limits the word heart to the feelings. But the heart in the Hebrew mind included the entire interior life of the

person. The feelings, the mind and the will were all part of “the heart.” The blessed exhibit purity in all three of these aspects of the interior world. That purity opens the road to a transparency that can be described as purity of heart.

“But how is it that “they shall see God?” This phrase has to do with knowledge or vision of God, and not with physical sight. John 1:18 says, “No one has ever seen God.” But knowledge of God and a vision of him are the privileges granted to the angels—and the pure in heart.”¹

Encounter

Take a few minutes to read Matthew 5:7–9 in a couple of Bible translations. Make a note of any differences between the translations and anything that especially jumps out at you.

Reflect

Jesus’ fifth beatitude pronounces the blessing of receiving mercy on those who show mercy (Mat. 5:7). This is a common theme throughout his teaching. **Read Matthew 18:21–35. What is the relationship between forgiveness and mercy? Based on this parable, when do we have opportunities to show mercy?**

The sixth beatitude contains a promise that the “pure in heart. . . shall see God” (Mat. 5:8). This beatitude appears to be drawn from Psalm 24 and the Psalmists reflection on the character of the person who is able to enter into God’s presence. **Read Psalm 24:1–6. According to this psalm, what does a pure heart look like? How can you pursue that type of undivided loyalty to God?**

It's easy to miss the significance of the promise that the pure in heart will "see God" because this beatitude is so familiar, but Scripture also tells us that God "lives in unapproachable light, whom no one has seen or can see" (1 Tim. 6:16). Nevertheless, Jesus' promise is clear the pure in heart will see God. **Read Revelation 20:11–21:4. What does this scene describe? How does it contain the greatest fulfillment of Jesus' promise?**

Jesus' seventh beatitude is a promise to those who pursue and make peace. He says peacemakers will be called "sons of God" (Matt. 5:9). We learned on Sunday that this is because they reflect the character of their Father in heaven who brought us to peace through great personal cost (see e.g., Rom. 5:1–2 and 2 Cor. 5:18–21).² **In what ways could our peacemaking cost us? Read Luke 17:1–4 for one idea.**

Examine

Based on 2 Timothy 3:16 ("All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness"), this series of questions is intended to help you figure out what you should do or believe in response to this text. (This passage may not have a clear answer for each question. Just use them to prompt your thinking.)

1. What does this passage tell me to believe?

(How does it teach me?)

2. What does this passage tell me not to believe?

(How does it reprove me?)

3. How does this passage tell me not to live?

(How does it correct me?)

4. How does this passage tell me to live?

(How does it train me in righteousness?)

Embrace

After spending significant time with this passage, you've probably learned a lot and heard God speak to you through His Word. Look back at your responses to the previous questions and ask God to show you how you can respond to this text this week.

Write down some ideas for how you can respond to the truth of God's Word.

About The Map

The Map exists to help you consistently reflect on Scripture as you pursue maturity in Christ. When you devote yourself to reading God's Word, and meditate on what you read, you're allowing Him to shape your thoughts, attitudes, and behaviors.

NOTES:

1. Kenneth E. Bailey, *Jesus through Middle Eastern Eyes: Cultural Studies in the Gospels* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2008), 83–84.
2. John R. W. Stott, *The Message of the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7): Christian Counter-Culture*, The Bible Speaks Today (Leicester: Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1985), 51.



Disciple-Making Guide

Kids Kindergarten through 6th grade receive Adventure Tokens for discipleship activities completed during the week. They can spend them at the Adventure Store on the last Sunday of the month.

Big Picture Questions for Unit 34: “God’s Plan for Paul”

Preschool: Q: When should we tell others about Jesus?
A: *We should tell about Jesus all the time.*

Kids (1-6): Q: When should we tell others about Jesus?
A: *We should always tell others about Jesus even when it is difficult.*

This Week’s Family Reading Plan

for Preschoolers: *The Sermon on the Mount**

Day 1: *Daniel 5-6*

Day 2: *Daniel 9-10, 12*

Day 3: *Ezra 1-2*

Day 4: *Ezra 3-4*

Day 5: *Ezra 5-6*

*Preschool readings are taken from *The Big Picture Interactive Bible Stories for Toddlers, New Testament* (B&H Publishing Group), available at Amazon.com & LifeWay Christian Store.

Key Passage for Unit 34: “God’s Plan for Paul”

Preschoolers: “For me, to live is Christ and to die is gain” (Philippians 1:21).

Kids (1-6 grade): “My eager expectation and hope is that ... Christ will be highly honored in my body, whether by life or by death. For me, to live is Christ and to die is gain” (Phil. 1:20-21).

Northway’s Family Ministry uses *The Gospel Project* to help preschoolers, kids, and students grow in their knowledge of Scripture and of Jesus Christ, about whom it was all written (Luke 24:44-49).



Adventure Token Coupon

Fill this out and bring it to Bible Study for your tokens!

I worked on learning my big picture question and key passage _____.

I read my Bible at home _____.

Child’s Name _____.

Parent’s Signature _____.

30 BIBLICAL BASICS

CORE BELIEFS

God | 2 Corinthians 13:13

I believe the God of the Bible is the only true God; Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Personal God | Psalm 121:1-2

I believe God is involved in and cares about my daily life.

Salvation by Grace | Ephesians 2:8-9

I believe a person comes into a right relationship with God by His grace, through faith in Jesus Christ.

Authority of the Bible | 2 Timothy 3:16-17

I believe the Bible is the inspired Word of God that guides my belief and action.

Identity in Christ | John 1:12

I believe I am significant because of my position as a child of God.

Church | Ephesians 4:15

I believe the church is God's primary way to accomplish His purposes on earth.

Humanity | John 3:16

I believe all people are loved by God and need Jesus Christ as their Savior.

Compassion | Psalm 82:3-4

I believe God calls all Christians to show compassion to those in need.

Stewardship | Psalm 24:1-2

I believe that everything I am and everything I own belong to God.

Eternity | John 14:1-2

I believe there is a heaven and a hell and that Jesus will return to judge all people and to establish His eternal kingdom.

CORE PRACTICES

Worship | Psalm 95:1-2

I worship God for who He is and what He has done for me.

Prayer | Psalm 66:18-20

I pray to God to know him, to find direction for my life, and to lay my requests before him.

Bible Study | Hebrews 4:12

I study the Bible to know God and his truth, and to find direction for my daily life.

Single-mindedness | Matthew 6:33

I focus on God and His priorities for my life.

Total Surrender | Romans 12:1

I dedicate my life to God's purposes.

Biblical Community | Acts 2:44-47

I fellowship with other Christians to accomplish God's purposes in my life, in the life of others, and in the world.

Spiritual Gifts | Romans 12:4-6

I know my spiritual gifts and use them to fulfill God's purposes.

Offering My Time | Colossians 3:17

I offer my time to fulfill God's purposes.

Giving My Resources | 2 Corinthians 8:7

I give my resources to fulfill God's purposes.

Sharing My Faith | Ephesians 6:19-20

I share my faith with others to fulfill God's purposes.

CORE VIRTUES

Love | 1 John 4:10-12

I am committed to loving God and loving others.

Joy | John 15:11

Despite my circumstances, I feel inner contentment and understand my purpose in life.

Peace | Philippians 4:6-7

I am free from anxiety because I have found peace with God, peace with others, and peace with myself.

Self-Control | Titus 2:11-13

I have the power through Christ to control myself.

Hope | Hebrews 6:19-20

I can cope with the hardships of life because of the hope I have in Jesus Christ.

Patience | Proverbs 14:29

I am slow to anger and endure patiently under the unavoidable pressures of life.

Kindness/Goodness | 1 Thessalonians 5:15

I choose to be kind and good in my relationships with others.

Faithfulness | Proverbs 3:3-4

I have established a good name with God and with others based on my loyalty to those relationships.

Gentleness | Philippians 4:5

I am thoughtful, considerate and calm in dealing with others.

Humility | Philippians 2:3-4

I choose to esteem others above myself.

The 30 Biblical Basics are the skeleton of a person being formed into the image of Jesus by His Spirit (Rom. 8:29; 2 Cor. 3:18), a helpful framework for the Christian's thoughts, actions, and character. As we commit ourselves to growing in Christ through the process of spiritual formation, we pray these statements become increasingly true of us. When they are, we'll be able to carry out the biblical mandate to "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind"; and, "Love your neighbor as yourself" (Luke 10:27), and to truly **love, live, and lead like Jesus**.