**The Inside Out**, **Kingdom of God: The Sermon on the Mount Matt. 5-7**

***Upside Down***

**Matthew 5:8**

 **Previous Beatitudes:**

1. "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
2. "Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall or will be comforted
3. “Blessed are the (meek) surrendered, for they shall inherit the earth.”
4. “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.”
5. “Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy.”

**This Week’s Beatitude:**

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

**Recalling, briefly, the fourth Beatitude:**

* This beatitude tells us that satisfaction and happiness comes for those who have a hunger and thirst for righteousness.
* **Right Living** – Being eager to live as God requires.
* **Doing Justice** – Wishing to see God’s will prevail with justice.

**Righteousness explained even further in specific ways: (the next few Beatitudes)**

* Mercy (7), **Purity** (8), and Peacemaking (9).

**Purity: The Pure in Heart**

* The first thing we learn from this beatitude is that Jesus is concerned with our heart. It is not enough to clean up our act on the outside.

**Matt. 23:25-26:**

25“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you clean the outside of the cup and the plate, but inside they are full of greed and self-indulgence. 26You blind Pharisee! First clean the inside of the cup and the plate, that the outside also may be clean.

**Important Point:** Jesus is not concerned with changing the behaviors of people or society, but rather to change the hearts of sinners like you and me.

**It’s not about ending the acts of sinning for Jesus:**

**Matthew 5:27-28:**

27“You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ 28But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart.

* It’s about something more than acts of sin such as adultery, lying, gossip, theft…

**The heart is what you are, in the secrecy of your thoughts and feelings, when nobody knows but God.**

**1 Samuel 16:7:**

…“Man looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart.”

* **Scripture teaches us that what comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart!**

**Matthew 15:18-19:**

18But what comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart, and this defiles a person. 19**For out of the heart come** evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false witness, slander.

**Matthew 12:33-34:**

33“Either make the tree good and its fruit good, or make the tree bad and its fruit bad, for the tree is known by its fruit. 34You brood of vipers! How can you speak good, when you are evil? **For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks**.

**Summary Point:**

* The heart, according to Jesus, is wicked. Jesus is not primarily concerned with some bad habits that we need to break. He came into the world because we have sin filled hearts that are in desperate need of purification.

**Purity of Heart:**

* It’s isn’t just about putting a stop to sin, it’s much deeper (our hearts).
* The heart reveals who we truly are and it shows the spiritual condition we are in (not just our acts, but our thoughts and feelings really matter).
* The heart is revealed by what comes out of our mouths.

**Purity of heart from three different biblical perspectives: David, James, and Jesus**

**David: Psalm 24:3-4:**

“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, who does not lift up his soul to what is false, and does not swear deceitfully.”

**Question:** Who shall draw near to God or be close to God’s presence (ascend the hill of the Lord)?

**Answer:** He who has clean hands and a pure heart.

**Answer:** He who does not lift up his soul to (falsehood, deceitfulness, or another).

**James: James 4:8**

“Draw near to God and **he will draw near to you**. **Cleanse your hands**, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you men of double mind.”

**Promise:** Draw near to God and he will draw near to you.

**Correlating Command**: Pursue true repentance for your sins.

**Jesus: Matthew 22:37:**

“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart.”

**Command:** Jesus commands/desires all of our hearts.

**From these perspectives we see some incredible things:**

1. Purity/Purity of heart attracts God’s presence. Your/Our sinfulness affects our closeness with God’s presence.
2. Purity of heart requires action such as repentance.
3. Purity of heart requires single minded devotion (all of our heart). A double minded person won’t have a pure heart.