

Handout 1: The Beatitudes Lesson 8

“BLESSED ARE THE PURE IN HEART FOR THEY WILL SEE GOD.”

Matthew 5:8 (RSV Catholic Edition)

We must begin by purifying ourselves before purifying others; we must be instructed to be able to instruct, become light to illuminate, draw close to God to bring him close to others, be sanctified to sanctify, lead by the hand and counsel prudently.”

St. Gregory of Nazianzus, *Oratio 2, 71* (as quoted in CCC# 1589).

Blessed are those who observe his instructions, who seek him with all their hearts ...

Psalm 119:2 (New Jerusalem translation)

Who may go up the mountain of the LORD? Who can stand in his holy place? The clean of hand and pure of heart ... Psalm 24:3-4

A clean heart create for me, God; renew in me a steadfast spirit. Psalm 51:12 (10)

Question: What does Scripture teach about the heart?

1. What does the Bible teach about the heart in Psalm 17:3; 1Samuel 16:7; and Psalm 44:22 (21)?
2. What does the Bible teach about the heart in Ezekiel 36:26-27; Psalms 51: 12(10), 19 (17); and Jeremiah 4:4; 31:31-33?
3. What does the Bible teach about the heart in Deuteronomy 4:29; Psalms 105:3; and Psalm 119:2, & 10?
4. What does the Bible teach about the heart in 1Kings 3:9; Hosea 2:16; and Deuteronomy 30:11-14?
5. What does the Bible teach about the heart in 1 Samuel 12:20, 24; Deuteronomy 6:5-6; and Psalm 111:1?

Psalm 24:1-10 defines the character the worshippers who are clean of heart. Please read this passage.

Question: Verses 3-6 identify who is worthy to join in the liturgical celebration. Who is worthy to come to Yahweh’s Temple and offer worship to God as identified in verse 4?

Question: How does Psalm 24:3-6 define the righteous believers? Give five characteristic of the righteous believer found in these verses.

Answer: The clean of heart:

- They can stand before God and offer Him worship [verse 3].
- They do not worship idols; either material or spiritual [verse 4].
- They do not lie or make false promises [verse 4].
- Their reward will be blessings and justice [verse 5].
- They love God and “seek His face” = do His will [verse 6].

Question: Who is the “King of Glory” in verse 7?

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Handout 2: The Beatitudes Lesson8 – The Righteous Man

When we live out the Beatitudes we are living in the image of Jesus Christ—the righteous man from Nazareth. Jesus was persecuted for His righteousness, and we should not be surprised when we are persecuted for choosing the righteousness of Jesus Christ over what the world values. Wisdom 2:12-24 presents a description of the “righteous man” who is persecuted by the worldly wicked.

Question: How does that passage prefigure the Passion of the Christ in the Gospels?

Answer:

The Righteous man of Wisdom 2:12-24	The Righteous man Jesus of Nazareth
Wisdom 2:16d: ... <i>and boasts that God is his father.</i>	Jesus called God “Father” (many times including Luke 15:34; John 20:17), an intimate association only granted to the Davidic kings (2 Samuel 7:14)
Wisdom 2:16c: <i>He calls blest the destiny of the just ...</i>	Jesus called the righteous “blessed” in the Beatitudes and other teachings (Matthew 5:1-12, Luke 6: 20-21; etc.).
Wisdom 2:17-18: <i>Let us see whether his words be true; let us find out what will happen to him. For if the just one be the son of God, he will defend him.</i>	God called Jesus His Son (Matthew 3:17; 17:5; Mark 1:11, Luke 9:35; etc.). Jesus called Himself God’s Son (Matthew 27:43; Luke 10:22; John 10:36; 11:4; 17:1; etc.) and so did the demon spirits (Matthew 8:29). Jesus was accused and condemned by the religious authorities through the testimony of false witnesses at His trial (Matthew 26:59; Mark 14:56).
Wisdom 2:19: <i>With revilement and torture let us put him to the test that we may have proof of his gentleness and try his patience.</i>	Jesus was beaten and tortured (Matthew 26:67-68; 27:26; Mark 14:65; 15:15-20; Luke 22:63-65).
Wisdom 2:20: <i>Let us condemn him to a shameful death ...</i>	Jesus was condemned to the shameful death of crucifixion (Deuteronomy 21:22-23; Matthew 27:66; Mark 15:15; Luke 23:20-25; Gal 3:13).
Wisdom 2:19: <i>With revilement...let us put him to the test ...</i>	The crowd taunted Him to see if God would save Him (Matthew 27:39-40; Mark 15:29; Luke 23:35).
Wisdom 2:20-22: <i>Let us condemn him to a shameful death; for according to his own words, God will take care of him. [...] nor discern the innocent soul’s reward.</i>	Jesus, the innocent Lamb of God, suffered a shameful death on the Cross at the hands of the unrighteous for the sake of both the righteous and the unrighteous. His reward was the Resurrection (Matthew 27:35-50; Mark 15:29-39; Luke 23:33-34).
Wisdom 2:23: <i>For God formed man to be imperishable; the image of his own nature he made him.</i>	Jesus was begotten in the image of God and suffered, died and was buried to be resurrected to new life in order to restore us to the image of the Father (John 1:14; 18; 3:16, 18; 1 John 4:9; Matthew 28:6; Mark 16:16:6; Luke 24:5-8).

Handout 3: The Beatitudes Lesson 8

Question for group discussion:

The pure/clean of heart are those who have souls of righteousness. Read the contrast of the righteous man as opposed to the man who in clings to wickedness in Wisdom 1:1-3:11. It may be helpful to consult the chart on Virtues and Sins/Vices from Lesson 7.

Question: Is what comes out of one's mouth a good way to determine "purity of heart?" What are the kinds of words from one's mouth that indicate a "heart cleaning" is in order through repentance and prayer? See the penalty for profaning the name of God under Old Covenant Law in Leviticus 24:16. Why is it that to profane the name of God is to inflict a self-curse?

Question: Is what one's thoughts focuses on and on what one's eyes are drawn to also a factor in determining "purity of heart?" Why? Are we culpable when we pay money to attend movies or other entertainment that glorifies or promotes sin? See the section "How We Participate in Sin" in the Virtues and Sins/Vices Chart.

Question: Some family traits are inherited: eye color, hair color, natural abilities. Other traits are learned: truthfulness, sincerity, honesty, dealing with anger, etc. What traits have we inherited through our baptism from our Heavenly Father? What traits are learned from Mother Church? How should we struggle against that inherited trait from the family of Adam called "concupiscence"? Concupiscence is a word from the Latin, *con* = thoroughly + *cupere*, to desire. As defined by the Modern Catholic Dictionary concupiscence is: *The insubordination of man's desires to the dictates of reason, and the propensity of human nature to sin as a result of original sin.* There are two aspects to concupiscence:

1. Concupiscence of the Eyes: *Unwholesome curiosity and an inordinate love of this world's goods. The first consists in an unreasonable desire to see, hear, and know what is harmful to one's virtue, inconsistent with one's state of life, or detrimental to higher duties ... and the other is*
2. Concupiscence of the Flesh: *The inordinate love of sensual pleasure, to which fallen man is naturally prone.*