

A Pure Heart to Serve the Lord

Sterling Franklin

Study Date: October, 2001 - Teenz4theLord.com

Category: Sermon/Bible Study

Note: Given to the "Inside Out" Online Youth Group

Additional Recommended Scripture Reading: Psalm 51

We live in a generation today that embraces sin all over the place. Writers of most television shows don't present a message pleasing to the Lord, instead they write about violence, gratuitous sex, gossip, and hate.

You can turn to any Fox, NBC, ABC, and CBS and expect to see an average of 20-25 violent acts per hour.....each hour of Saturday Morning programming.

Though the programming may seem a little more gratuitous on prime time television, the violence is on 24 hours a day, and what we take in will affect us if we don't have a good filter on things.

Psalm 24:3-5 - 3 Who shall ascend into the hill of the LORD? or who shall stand in his holy place? 4 He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully. 5 He shall receive the blessing from the LORD, and righteousness from the God of his salvation.

We need to be pure in heart before the Lord, simple as that.

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

I'm saying...WHO wants to see our Wonderful Lord?!

I CERTAINLY DO! It will be the best moment of any of our existences, meeting our Creator! Hallelujah!

Psalm 51:10 – "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me."

So, how do we go about this 'being pure' business?

Proverbs 4:23 - Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.

Solomon, through inspiration of God, tells us in that verse that we need to guard ourselves through wisdom into not being corrupted by outside sources.

Pretend there's a boy named Daniel. Daniel lives in the middle of West Palm Street. Living next door to his house is a family of four who always encourage Daniel and give him a good time by playing games with him as a group. Daniel used to be a shy, sad, and introverted boy until he started visiting their house, but now, he is a happy, outgoing young man. Then one week, that family of four took a vacation ... On the other side of the street was a family of seven who always yelled their brains out at each other. Daniel visited their house and spent some time with them. By the middle of that week, Daniel started using drugs with them and began yelling at his parents. When the family of four came back, they hardly recognized Daniel.

As humans, we have developing characters and personalities. Part of what shapes us are the people around us -- our environment and our peers.

We are sponges to our surroundings, and we pick up anything that we expose ourselves too in great quantities.

What if we expose ourselves to the Bible?

2 Timothy 3:16-17 - 16 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: 17 That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

The Message of Jesus Christ is our guide to better living. The thief came to steal, kill, and destroy, but Jesus has come that we would have Life, and Life more Abundantly! (*John 10:10*)

Some sound advice from *Colossians 3:1* - Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.

Matthew 6:33 - But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

Being pure in heart is not a cakewalk to start out. Satan is out for you to be pulled away from God. However, the more firm you are in Jesus Christ, the easier it will be to escape sin and temptation to sin.

Sin is like a beaten path. Once you commit a specific sin, it becomes easier and easier to commit that sin the following times. It's like a mown path straight to that sin...until you finally trust the Lord and avoid it once. Once you avoid that sin, you first of all have pleased the Lord, and also have seen proof that you CAN avoid committing that sin through Jesus' Help.

A very on-the-money definition of sin is found in *1 John 3:4*

1 John 3:4 - Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.

Romans 2:14-15 - 14 For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: 15 Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another;)

God did a marvelous thing when He created our 'consciences'. He wrote the law, summarized by the 10 Commandments, on our hearts. We generally have a sense of right and wrong by the feelings we get from our consciences, and when we are Saved by the Grace of Jesus Christ, by the Holy Spirit.

Remember that God the Father had to give His Only Begotten Son for us...why? Because we create a chasm between us & Him when we sin, and Jesus is the bridge we need to reach Almighty God.

Before we accept Jesus Christ as our Lord & Savior, we are slaves to sin.

Romans 6:20-23 – 20 For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness. 21 What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death. 22 But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. 23 For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

But God has given us the way out of sin and guilt and shame – and that is through the mighty work of Jesus Christ on the cross.

All we have to do is ask Him for forgiveness of our sins and to be our Lord & Savior, believing in what He did on the cross, to have eternal life with Him in Heaven!

We will then produce fruit, or results, upon obeying God, that will improve the quality of our lives infinitely!

Jesus is Faithful and Just to forgive us of all our sins and to cleanse us of all our unrighteousness (*1 John 1:9*)

Hebrews 9:13-14: 13 For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: 14 How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

Before Jesus died on the cross, people had to offer blood sacrifices through the high priest, and those blood sacrifices were of animals. There were other offerings, such as those of the field (vegetables and grains), but the sin offerings were always of animals.

Jesus only had to die once for our sins FOREVER, and through Him we have the remission of sins! High priests had to offer blood offerings once a year in the Holy of Holies, but now? No more! Jesus is our perfect Sacrifice, and He is seated at the Right Hand of the Father, seated in Glory!

Yes, we will all stumble, but we won't fall when we have Jesus to catch us and put us back upright on our feet on the pathway to holiness. Ultimate Holiness is a pursuit, not an achievement, and we will not be Ultimately Holy when we are here on earth.

"If ye love me, keep my commandments." – *John 14:15*

If we follow His Commandments, He will reveal more of Himself to you as you increase in relationship with Him.

John 14:21 - He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.

HE must increase, we must decrease.

We have the Holy Ghost in this day and age...

John 14:26 - But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

We need to Praise the Lord! Life out there in the world can be a circus without the intervention of our Sovereign Lord! Give the Lord time to work in our lives and He will honor that and bless you for it!

One of the functions of the Holy Ghost is to sanctify us, not to mention, to set us completely, Praise the Lord, ON FIRE for Jesus! He will help us if we allow Him to.

We need to LONG to be pure and holy before Him! We can ask Him in prayer for that, and for a zeal for the things of His Kingdom. You WON'T regret it! Praise the Lord!

So what if we go through temptations and trials? How can we stay pure?

James 1:2-4 - 2 My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; 3 Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. 4 But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.

Cast all your cares upon Jesus, and He will strengthen you in the hard times of life. Whatever you face, He is the Answer, and He will be all the comfort you will ever need if you only trust in Him.

The devil hates it when we trust in the Lord and will come at us and attack us. If you live a godly life, you will DEFINITELY suffer persecution (*2 Tim. 3:12*), but we need to stand with our firm foundation in Jesus Christ by being not only hearers of the Word, but doers (*James 1:22*)!

One simple piece of advice – When you are tempted, look to the Cross of Christ. Think of what He has done, Praise Him, and the temptation will decrease. The more you taste of our sweet Lord, the less you will want to taste of this bitter world of sin.

Philippians 4:8 - Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.

2 Corinthians 7:1 - Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

This world is a confusion-filled world. Strife, stress, anger, envy, hatred, lust, and simply and pure evil fill this world. So many don't know the Love of Christ.

Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is Liberty. Whosoever the Son sets free is Free Indeed! AMEN?!

If you have never experienced this Saving Love of Christ before or have lost your flare for the things of God, GET that fire back, because it's the best way to live your life.

If you want to accept Jesus Christ as your Lord & Savior or want your flare, pray this prayer with me. God will honor it, without a doubt!

Lord Jesus, I am a sinner and need Your Forgiveness. I am sorry for my transgressions and want to live in Your Ways. Give me a passion and a FIRE for the things of You, Lord. I give my life to You and ask You to be my Lord & Savior. Thank You, Lord, for dying on the cross for the payment of my sins and rising again to prove You were the Son of God. You have done SO MUCH for me, let me give you the Glory through my life and let Your Light shine through me, In Jesus' Name I pray, Amen.

If you prayed that, you can email me or tell a good Christian friend around you, anything you feel like doing. It's GREAT news! We would like to help you grow in your Walk with the Lord!

Once cleansed, we need to stay in the Word of God to stay as pure as possible.

Psalms 119:11 – Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.

The Word of God is POWERFUL!

Psalm 19:7 - The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple.

Let us be wise – let us live our lives purely before the Lord and be like the type of man Jesus Describes in *Luke 6:48*...

He is like a man which built an house, and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock: and when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently upon that house, and could not shake it: for it was founded upon a rock.

No matter how much you are attacked or tempted, don't give in. Jesus has a better plan than the guilt and sadness that will encompass you when you sin!

Satan is angry because he knows he has a short time left on this earth, but if we are Born-again Believers, we have the power over him by the Blood of Jesus! Praise the Lord! Jesus is the best news any media can publish.

Amen!