

INTEGRITY OF HEART - THE KEY TO EVERYTHING

**Sunday, June 14th, 2026 - 10 a.m. - Cedarview Community Church
Pastor Don Horban**

IPAD TEXT - Matthew 5:8 - “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.”

In these words Jesus settles forever the condition needed to have God revealed to the soul. Refuse the lie of this mystical age that you have to go to a certain place, or have your being stirred to a certain state in order to **“see God.”**

Jesus gives a certain, settled promise. He reveals the ***Divine desire and intent*** of our Heavenly Father to ***show Himself*** to His people. The condition for ***seeing God*** has never changed. It is not a special ***physical place***. It is not an expanded ***emotional state***. The blessing of heavenly revelation isn't found at the hand of some specially anointed prophet or apostle.

The plain fact is Jesus attached no ***external conditions*** to seeing God. Nothing else had to be contrived or manipulated ***outwardly*** at all. Only one condition is given by the Great Teacher - ***a pure heart*** - purity on the inside core of the life. The condition for seeing God is ***moral***. Jesus called it a ***“pure heart.”*** The pure in heart ***will*** see God. No doubt about it. Period.

There's another portion of Scripture where Jesus ***explains*** exactly what purity of heart is:

IPAD TEXT - Matthew 23:25-28 - "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. [26] You blind Pharisee! First clean the inside of the cup and the plate, that the outside also may be clean. [27] "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs, which outwardly appear beautiful, but within are full of dead people's bones and all uncleanness. [28] So you also outwardly appear righteous to others, but within you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness."

Jesus describes dishes washed only on the outside and tombs painted white while bones are rotting on the inside. In either case the point is the same. The inner state has not received the attention the outer has. More attention has been given to the **outward appearance** than the **inner condition**. Nothing **looks** that bad. But things **are** bad. And sooner or later, the inward decay is going to manifest itself.

Purity of heart is cleaning the inside of the dish first. Purity of heart is cleaning the part no one else sees **before** you clean anything else. Purity of heart starts at the **center** and works its way to the **surface**. Purity of heart is making sure there is no outward part of my life that would give a better impression of my life than the part of me no one else knows about.

You can **measure** purity of heart. It's measured by thoughts, attitudes, private devotion, secret sacrifice, and your deepest longings and passions. That's who you **are**. The rest of your life is simply what you **do**.

This is why the whole Bible puts such great stress on the inner self, or the **heart**, as it is most frequently called. We're to love God with our whole heart. We're to serve the Lord with a sincere heart. The heart is the fountain from which the river of who you are springs - ***"As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he"*(KJV)**.

People who lived close to the throne always had this concern on their minds. David may be the best example: - **Psalm 86:11 - "Teach me your way, O Lord, that I may walk in your truth; unite my heart to fear your name."** - IPAD TEXT

Walking in God's way wasn't just a matter of intellectually grasping the truth. The heart - the inward self - had to be united around the same goal. One part of the life couldn't walk in God's way while another part was indifferent. The **whole** heart had to be **united** around God.

In other words, the inside of the cup couldn't be left dirty while the outside was polished up.

IPAD TEXT - Psalm 119:10 - "With my whole heart I seek you; let me not wander from your commandments!"

That phrase, “***with whole heart I seek you...***” doesn’t just refer to ***emotional*** intensity. What David means is, “There is no part of my life left behind in my reaching out for You! My devotion to you is the same in the hidden part of my life as it is in the visible part of my life. I seek you with ***all*** my heart.”

The word we use to describe that kind of wholeness is ***integrity***. In fact, just think about the word for a minute. Think of words having the same root:

- a) We call whole numbers ***integers***. By that we mean there are no fractions - no pieces left over. The number is a complete unit in and of itself. It is not divided into any pieces.
- b) If we refer to bringing scattered members of a group of people from different areas together into unity we say we are ***integrating*** them. Integration is the process of moving from separate parts to wholeness and completeness.
- c) If something is decaying and becoming corrupt, that process of corruption (like the decaying bodies in the whitewashed tombs Jesus described) is called ***disintegration***. Things that were once whole and complete literally go to pieces. You end up with only fragments of what was once whole and complete.

What is easily seen in those simple examples is the way **integrity** is related to **wholeness**. We're not just talking about being **nice**. We're not just talking about being **good** (as important as that is). When we talk about integrity, we're talking about being **whole**. Being **complete**. We're talking about how to avoid a life that is **splintered, fractured, and fragmented**.

So, think of these **two directions** when you think of integrity: **Moving into wholeness** - "Unite my heart to fear Thy Name." And think of the opposite - **moving toward disintegration** - the Pharisees (remember, they were **religious** people) who were increasingly like dead men's bones on the inside - increasingly **weakening in the structure of their beings** - like **bone cancer** - moving into a condition of less and less strength and wholeness.

This is so important because it helps us properly define God's true desire for us in the issue of holiness. Away forever with the notion that we're merely talking about the maintaining of some list of codified regulations. Away forever with the notion that somehow a heart for God is the equivalent of taking all the fun out of life. **Right in the meaning of the word integrity is wholeness and health**. Integrity is the process of rooting out the things that rot your daily life and your eternal soul. Integrity is the path to completeness.

I want to show you three examples of the power of integrity from the Scriptures. I want to show you how integrity will enable you to ***avoid mistakes, expand ministry, and preserve fruitfulness*** in your walk with Jesus:

1) INTEGRITY OF HEART WILL PROTECT YOU FROM MISTAKES

IPAD TEXT - Genesis 20:1-6 - "From there Abraham journeyed toward the territory of the Negeb and lived between Kadesh and Shur; and he sojourned in Gerar. [2] And Abraham said of Sarah his wife, "She is my sister." And Abimelech king of Gerar sent and took Sarah. [3] But God came to Abimelech in a dream by night and said to him, "Behold, you are a dead man because of the woman whom you have taken, for she is a man's wife." [4] Now Abimelech had not approached her. So he said, "Lord, will you kill an innocent people? [5] Did he not himself say to me, 'She is my sister'? And she herself said, 'He is my brother.' In the integrity of my heart and the innocence of my hands I have done this." [6] Then God said to him in the dream, "Yes, *I know that you have done this in the integrity of your heart, and it was I who kept you from sinning against me. Therefore I did not let you touch her.*"

This is quite a story. Abraham has a truly beautiful wife. He knows when King Abimelech sees her he's going to want her for his harem. And Abraham knows that kings have ways of getting rid of husbands of beautiful women if they want those wives badly enough. So Abraham, being that great man of faith and power and courage, has a plan. He lies. He gives his wife to King Abimelech as his sister. He doesn't mind losing Sarah as long as he can save his own skin. Chivalry is not dead.

But before Abimelech can come near Sarah, God comes to him in the night and tells him he's a dead man (3). That will get your attention right away. Then Abimelech says these important words: ***"God, I didn't know Sarah was Abraham's wife. Didn't you hear him tell me she was his sister?"***

And then comes the mighty lesson on integrity: "I know you were unaware of who Sarah was. I know you did this in the ***'integrity of your own heart'*** (6). That's why I kept you from coming near her and committing this great sin."

Here's a truth worth a million dollars. ***God will keep you from mistakes you don't even know about yet - mistakes you are heading for unintentionally - if, in the areas you do know His will, you maintain integrity of heart.***

That is a wonderful life lesson. It's the best lesson I know about personal holiness. You don't have to know **everything**. But you must live up to everything you **know**. If you put all your energies into being a person of integrity God will keep your life on track. Worry more about being the right **kind** of person. God will direct your paths and keep you from blunders you can't even imagine yet. Never forget it.

2) INTEGRITY OF HEART WILL EXPAND AND PROTECT YOUR SERVICE FOR THE LORD

IPAD TEXT - Psalm 25:19-21 - "Consider how many are my foes, and with what violent hatred they hate me. [20] Oh, guard my soul, and deliver me! Let me not be put to shame, for I take refuge in you. [21] *May integrity and uprightness preserve me, for I wait for you.*"

Under God's blessing, David had expanded the boundaries of Israel's territory to the point that managing and protecting it became more than he could maintain. The demands of his kingship were increasing beyond his own talents and skills.

This opens up a very practical issue. How do you keep your ministry - your work for God - the boundaries of what He has placed in your hand - How do you keep it fruitful and safe and growing?

Especially today, the tendency is to look to the sharpening of skills as the first line of preservation of fruitfulness. Seminars and conferences and leadership books abound. And there's nothing **wrong** with using all the talents God has given you to the best of your ability. That's perfectly righteous and good.

But the point from these verses is it's not **enough**. And it's not even the **first** necessity on the list. Here's what David learns, and passes on to us: ***what is given by Divine grace is maintained by integrity of heart - "May integrity and uprightness preserve me"(21).***

Your skills and gifts are **important**. But they are never **sufficient** for the task. You can never learn enough management techniques to **sustain** a fruitful work for God. David learns real quick that the **boundaries** of a kingdom are graciously determined by the Lord. But human **ingenuity** can never maintain them.

Listen, what will mark our success over whatever sphere of influence God chooses to give us - be that a ***Bible Study group, a youth group, a Christian Education Class, our homes, or the kind of witness we want to build in our place of work*** - what will establish long-term success in any of those - isn't ***natural talent or charm***. It's ***integrity of heart***.

Do sharpen all your skills. **Do** be the best you can possibly be. **Do** work as hard as you can. But remember, as a Christian, success isn't **first** measured by what you can **do**. It's more measured by what you do **first**. Keep your heart with all diligence. In God's order of things, life flows out of it.

Perhaps the best is saved for last:

3) **INTEGRITY OF HEART WILL KEEP GOD'S GLORY ON YOUR LIFE**

IPAD TEXT - 1 Kings 9:3-5 - "And the Lord said to him, "I have heard your prayer and your plea, which you have made before me. I have consecrated this house that you have built, *by putting my name there forever. My eyes and my heart will be there for all time. [4] And as for you, if you will walk before me, as David your father walked, with integrity of heart and uprightness, doing according to all that I have commanded you, and keeping my statutes and my rules, [5] then I will establish your royal throne over Israel forever, as I promised David your father, saying, 'You shall not lack a man on the throne of Israel.'*"

I know some of the elements of that promise regarding the throne of the house of David are unique. But there is also an eternal principle tucked in there for all of us. These words answer to the unspoken fear all of us have when we see the hand of God at work in our lives. While people and churches seem to find all sorts of ways to **generate** a move of the Holy Spirit, we aren't as sure how to **sustain** God's glory in our midst.

There is always the nagging fear that somehow, when the dust all settles, ***we will be left where we were before***. We all know of so many who can experience renewal, but can't save their marriage - who can get blessed in a meeting but can't endure persecution - who can raise their hands and worship but can't resist temptation.

All of this presses the urgency of this question: How do we **preserve and build on** the wonderful things God does in our best spiritual moments? We surely don't need more ups and downs. We don't need more hype. What we want to know is how do we keep God's glory on our lives? What is it that **sustains** the blessing of God among His people?

This text is relevant because it certainly **does** contain a glorious moment of blessing and power. And it's important because it tells us how to experience God's presence in a **perpetual** manner. It seems God labors to tuck that very thought into this text - **1 Kings 9:3 -**

"And the Lord said to him, "I have heard your prayer and your plea, which you have made before me. I have consecrated this house that you have built, by putting my name there forever. My eyes and my heart will be there for all time." - IPAD TEXT

I don't want to struggle to find God any more than I have to. I don't want the pressure of **working up** a revival every time I come before Him in worship. I'm thankful for those times when they come by God's grace. But more than anything, I just want to **dwell** in the presence of God and have his grace **abide** in my life. This text says **integrity of heart** is the way that happens.

Here's what I'm striving to re-learn after 43 years of ministry in the same congregation. I share it with you for what it's worth. More than anything else, concentrate on being **pure in heart**. Don't worry so much about knowing every detail of God's plan for your life. Strive more to have your heart **pure in everything you do know about humility, service, honesty, and ongoing repentance in your walk with Jesus.**

Repent frequently and thoroughly. Keep caring about how your life looks to Jesus more than you care about how it looks in front of anyone else. In your leadership ministry watch out for ***pride and greed*** more than anything else. Keep the inside of your life as clean as the outside. And I take great delight in telling you - on pretty good authority - that the pure in heart ***will*** see God. Jesus said God will make sure of it.