

Matthew 5:8

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

Analysis

This beatitude proclaims 'Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God' (Greek: καθαροὶ τῇ καρδίᾳ, 'pure in heart'). Purity here is not mere external ritual cleanliness but internal moral integrity. The 'heart' (καρδίᾳ) in Hebrew thought represents the center of volition, emotion, and moral decision-making. 'They shall see God' (θεὸν ὄψονται) promises direct vision and intimate knowledge of God - the ultimate blessing. This echoes Psalm 24:3-4's question about who may ascend God's hill, answered by those with clean hands and pure hearts. Only the internally transformed can perceive and enjoy God's presence.

Historical Context

Jewish purity laws focused extensively on external ritual cleanliness, with elaborate systems for ceremonial purification. Jesus' emphasis on heart purity challenges this external focus, anticipating His later conflicts with Pharisees over tradition versus internal righteousness (Matthew 15:1-20). 'Seeing God' was considered impossible and fatal in Old Testament theology (Exodus 33:20), making this promise revolutionary. It anticipates the beatific vision - direct knowledge of God in His presence.

Related Passages

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. What is the difference between external religious performance and genuine purity of heart?
2. How does heart purity enable us to perceive God's presence and character?
3. In what ways do divided loyalties and mixed motives cloud our vision of God?

Interlinear Text

Μακάριοι οἱ καθαροὶ τῇ καρδίᾳ ὅτι αὐτοὶ τὸν Θεὸν
Blessed G3588 are the pure G2513 in heart G2588 for G3754 they G846 G3588 God G2316

ὅψονται

shall see

G3700

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 24:4 (Parallel theme): He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully.

Psalms 51:10 (References God): Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.

Hebrews 10:22 (Parallel theme): Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.

Hebrews 12:14 (Parallel theme): Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord:

Proverbs 22:11 (Parallel theme): He that loveth pureness of heart, for the grace of his lips the king shall be his friend.

James 4:8 (References God): Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded.

1 Peter 1:22 (Parallel theme): Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently:

James 3:17 (Parallel theme): But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.

Psalms 15:2 (Parallel theme): He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart.

Titus 1:15 (Parallel theme): Unto the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled.

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