

Psalms 24:4

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully.

Analysis

The answer requires moral purity: 'clean hands and a pure heart.' Hands represent deeds (external righteousness), heart represents motives (internal righteousness). 'Not lifted up his soul unto vanity' means rejecting idolatry and false worship. 'Nor sworn deceitfully' requires truthfulness. From a Reformed perspective, these requirements are impossible for fallen humanity (Rom. 3:23), pointing to our need for Christ's imputed righteousness. Only through union with Christ do believers meet these standards—His purity covers us.

Historical Context

These qualifications echoed Torah requirements for priests and worshipers. They established an ethical standard that constantly drove Israel back to sacrifice and atonement, anticipating Christ's perfect fulfillment of all righteousness.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. How do these requirements expose your need for Christ's righteousness?

2. What does 'clean hands and pure heart' mean in practical Christian living?

Interlinear Text

הַיָּדָיו	כַּפַּיִם	וְיָרֵךְ	לֵב בָּר	אֶשְׁרֵי	לֹא
He that hath clean	hands	and a pure	heart	H834	H3808
H5355	H3709	H1249	H3824		
נֶשֶׁא	לִשְׁוֵא	נַפְשׁוֹ	וְלֹא	נֶשֶׁבַע	לְמַרְמָה:
who hath not lifted up	unto vanity	his soul	H3808	nor sworn	deceitfully
H5375	H7723	H5315		H7650	H4820

Additional Cross-References

Matthew 5:8 (Parallel theme): Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

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

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

Job 17:9 (Parallel theme): The righteous also shall hold on his way, and he that hath clean hands shall be stronger and stronger.

2 Corinthians 7:1 (Parallel theme): 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.

Psalms 73:1 (Parallel theme): Truly God is good to Israel, even to such as are of a clean heart.

Psalms 26:6 (Parallel theme): I will wash mine hands in innocency: so will I compass thine altar, O LORD:

1 Timothy 2:8 (Parallel theme): I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting.

Psalms 18:20 (Parallel theme): The LORD rewarded me according to my righteousness; according to the cleanness of my hands hath he recompensed me.

Acts 15:9 (Parallel theme): And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith.

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