

A CLEAN HEART

First Century Gospel Church/Philadelphia S07A (Ref. #2147 0828 15A) 0718 21P

To have our sins forgiven and our heart kept pure by the power of God is more valuable spiritually than anything else. A clean heart keeps its trust on the Atonement of Christ, which will give us a solid foundation for meeting tests scripturally. Starting right means not tolerating any wrong attitudes or actions in our life that are against Bible teaching. To start right and then to be kept right with God is only done in His strength—never in our own strength.

1 Peter 1:3-5, We *“are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.”*

The most important thing we can do is to *“Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you.”* (Matthew 6:33) Seeking the kingdom means eliminating unscriptural attitudes we were tolerating, by God’s help alone, as we look unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith.

Hebrews 12:1-2 *“Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset [entangles] us, and let us run with patience [endurance NKJV] the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith.”*

If we are in an unscriptural position in any part of our lives or have a wrong attitude concerning anything, we are to make changes quickly and get on scriptural grounds. We should not be involved with or interested in anything that would hinder our spiritual growth. If we have truly given our life to God, He will reveal anything that we should not tolerate or be involved in and will help us eliminate whatever that may be.

The clean heart always begins with a commitment to do the will of God in every part of our life, a full and final surrender of our life to God. A half-hearted surrender will not bring the desired results. The Christian’s walk is an endurance race and we must patiently and persistently continue on the road and stay in God’s will. We are to be occupied with keeping our minds fully committed to God Himself and His great love and mercy toward us; and His Almighty power that is waiting to do all things for us.

Keeping our hearts pure and clean and staying in God's will is so important. We are to be occupied with and focused on God, and what the Atonement of His Son has done for us. Satan's plan is to keep us occupied with anything else, and he has a multitude of schemes and tricks. From work to leisure, from electronic devices to sports and many other entertainment activities, to keep our minds occupied 24/7, just to be sure we are not dwelling on our spiritual necessities.

The devil's plan would seem to be obvious, but without spiritual vision to see it, we are blinded. His great plan is to keep our hearts and minds, and our energy focused on anything and everything else but God. When the devil got the apostle Peter's eyes on the waves instead of the Savior, it caused him to sink. (Matthew 14:30) If Satan can divert our focus away from what is of spiritual value, we will also start to sink under our troubles, and spiritual fruit will be hindered—we must run the race with endurance.

Everyone is looking for peace, happiness, and contentment, but God's way is the only way to real peace and happiness—and we gain great contentment only from Him. Everyone's goal and every decision they make in a general sense—is to find happiness and peace—but never really finding it, because these two are only found when our hearts and minds are totally focused on God and doing His will.

Enormous amounts of money are spent in business and research; as well as much time and energy trying to find happiness. However, only by focusing on God and having our minds totally occupied with Him, will we find true happiness, peace, and contentment.

The devil will fight every step of the way, and he will try to make it seem so difficult, but if we are determined to keep our eyes on God, and be occupied with how to trust on the Atonement Blood of His Son, we will eventually reap a harvest of spiritual fruit.

When beginning the Christian life, we are generally interested in, and occupied with, everything else other than God. We will soon learn, however, that this tendency must be changed into being occupied with, or interested in, God and His Truth. As we consider ourselves less and less, and look to God more and more, God will reveal His love, mercy, and power more and more, until we begin to know His true character.

Psalms 42:1-2, *"As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. 2 My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God?"* We should continually be, as Hebrews 12:2 says, *"Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of*

our faith.” Focusing only on God, and what Jesus did on the cross, enables us to eventually see that He is a God of patience, power, love, and mercy.

Spiritual C light is needed—2 Corinthians 3:18, *“All of us have faces that veil removed so that we can be mirrors that brightly reflect the glory of the Lord [are changed into the same image]. And as the Spirit of the Lord works within us, we become more and more like him and reflect his glory even more.”* When we look at *ourselves*, we are changed into the image of self, but when we look to *God*, we change to His image “by the Spirit of the Lord” and will have a clean heart.

David had to keep God ever before him. His troubles with his son Absalom were caused by his own wrong decisions. Absalom rebelled against his own father, but his attempt to take the throne failed, and Absalom himself was killed. David’s deliverance came when he met this rebellion in God’s way. Psalm 27:1, *“The LORD is my light and my salvation; Whom shall I fear? The LORD is the strength of my life; Of whom shall I be afraid?”*

It is good to know that God is with us when Satan uses someone *against* us. We are not to worry, nor to fight the battle ourselves, but to let God fight it for us. Psalm 27:3-4, *“Though an army may encamp against me, My heart shall not fear; Though war may rise against me, In this I will be confident. One thing I have desired of the LORD, That will I seek: That I may dwell in the house of the LORD All the days of my life, To behold the beauty of the LORD, And to inquire in His temple.”*

David’s focus was on the Lord through every trial—he was running with patient endurance the race that was set before him. David had been in perilous situations; extremely difficult battles; and had been entangled in serious sins, but he eventually came to the place where he could see that repentance and submission to God was the only way to the kingdom of God.

David had enjoyed many blessings, and he was head of the greatest kingdom in the world at that time. He had won numerous battles and wars with enemies, but after reviewing his experiences in life, he came to the conclusion that the most spiritually valuable thing for him, was to focus on God and to be occupied with Him at all times.

David learned these spiritual lessons early on—when he was in the cave of Adullam, being hunted by King Saul, he was inspired to write Psalm 34:4, *‘I sought the LORD, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears. 5-6 Those who look to him are radiant; their faces are never covered with shame. This poor man called, and the LORD heard him; he saved him out of all his troubles.’*

God was with him and preserved his life. ⁷ *“The angel of the LORD encamps around those who fear him, and he delivers them.”* The prophet wrote the same thought Isaiah 26:3, *“Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.”*

When we look at our problems and troubles, we are filled with doubt and despair; but when we keep our eyes on God, His Son, and the cross, we are filled with peace, quietness, and rest. No matter how difficult our situation may seem to be, when we focus on Jesus; on the divine power of God that brought Him to life, and on God’s love for us, we are ready to receive the victory.

Our first thought of the day should be—that neither Satan nor sin can have control of me, but that through faith in the Atonement of Christ, God is given full control. We have confessed and forsaken our sins, so we must believe they are erased and not an issue anymore. Our life is in God’s hands as *“a living sacrifice”* Romans 12:1, so we are acceptable to Him, through our steadfast trust on the Blood of Jesus—we are running this race with endurance.

If we have forsaken all past sins and are not presently following the way of the world, we are to see ourselves being, *“transformed by the renewing of your mind.”* Romans 12:2. Then we are in a position to *“prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.”* We keep that position of trust, as we continue to endure through our faith in His Son.

Our heart is kept pure by our faith in Christ, so as we hold on to that attitude, the blessings God has for us, are able to flow in, and the greatest reward that we will ever receive, is to see God Himself, and to live with Him forever. Matthew 5:8, *“Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.”* The presence of God means happiness and blessing forever.

Two things to keep ever before us, as they are very important in this endurance race—*First*; to be sure that our heart is pure and kept pure by not tolerating anything in our life in opposition to God’s Word. We are to 1 John 1:9, *“confess our sins, [because] he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”* At that point we are 1 Peter 1:5 *“kept by the power of God through faith.”*

Second; to be sure our mind is occupied with, and we are focusing our attention on God at all times. We are to give Him our attention, and to keep our trust on Him continually—knowing that His great love and power is ready to do incredible things for us. Psalm 34:4, *“I sought the LORD, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears.”*

Whatever the situation is that we are facing, if we ask God for His strength to meet it right and we do not resent it, the matter will prove to be of great spiritual value to us. Whatever is said to upset us, or whatever is done to harm us, God will turn it into a blessing, if we will place it in His hands.

If we try to avenge ourselves Romans 12:19 we are being overcome *by* evil, but if we let God bring about a solution in His way and time, we are overcoming the bad with good; Romans 12:21 *“Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.”* That would be keeping a clean heart and running the race with endurance, headed toward God’s kingdom.

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