

Purity

BIBLE PASSAGE – Matthew 5.8

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

In some ways being a Christian is really tough – you’ve got to stand up, stand out and be different from the world around

What did Jesus say in Luke 12.49-53? Summarise what these Bible verses say to us...

I have come to bring fire on the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled! But I have a baptism to undergo, and what constraint I am under until it is completed! Do you think I came to bring peace on earth? No, I tell you, but division. From now on there will be five in one family divided against each other, three against two and two against three. They will be divided, father against son and son against father, mother against daughter and daughter against mother, mother-in-law against daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against mother-in-law.'

Have you ever wondered how a sword is forged and made strong? It’s often made strong through going through a process of purifying the metal and fire. Sometimes God allows things in our lives to help us and to toughen us up a bit. He never does bad things but he knows how to help us become the best that we can be!

So this small group will look at something called PURITY. What’s that? It means being pure in your ways and in your thinking. We all find this hard. It means thinking like Jesus does about things and not as other people do.

Areas where this is difficult can be not thinking sexually about people, not being jealous about what other people have, wanting things we don’t need and fighting...

What other areas and things do Christians struggle in & with?

Back in the Old Testament, there were all kinds of rules and regulations about doing this and not doing that. These were called the 'Mosaic Law'. The New Testament says that Jesus fulfilled all of these things. It means that when we're Christians with Jesus in us, we're not under all those rules and regulations any more.

But it doesn't mean we should go around not being pure. In fact with Jesus in us, we have a higher standard to live up to (he helps us and walks with us step by step – so don't worry if you're not perfect, none of us are!) The main thing is that we have a heart to do what is right!

Read what Jesus said in Matthew 5.27-28:

You have heard that it was said, "You shall not commit adultery." But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart.

Can you explain from the Bible verses the way that Jesus asks us to live to a higher standard?

What areas does the Bible say we need to change in? Read Galatians 5.19-21 and discuss some of these things with people in your group or Christian mates

The Bible tells us ways we can be pure – Galatians 5.22-23 for example. There are 7 'fruits' of the Spirit listed here – that means 7 things that show God's Holy Spirit is at work in our life – what are they? (Try and learn these verses)

1 -----

2 -----

3 -----

4 -----

5 -----

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Ask God to change you to be like this...

We need help to be pure – Galatians 5.25 gives us the answer – the Holy Spirit

Sometimes it's not cool to do what's right – it seems much more risky and cool to do what is wrong. This is called rebellion (also referred to as 'witchcraft' in the Bible) – it's what caused Satan to fall from heaven. Romans 8.6-7 says if people are controlled by sin then the result is death. Where people are controlled by the Spirit there is life and peace. Feel stressed or unhappy deep inside? It's time to deal with sin

Read 1 John 1.8-10. Now read Isaiah 1.18 – Jesus is waiting for you to pray today.