

“Blessed are the pure in HEART, for they shall see God.” Matthew 5:8



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All scriptures are NKJV unless noted otherwise.

Summary: *The pure in heart will see God – so will you and I see God? In this sermon we cover: What is one’s “heart” spiritually? What does a “pure heart” look like? How and when do we get a pure heart? Can we purify our own hearts? Can someone with a pure heart still sin in this life? What kind of heart do we naturally have? Is our present new heart still hostile to God, deceitful and desperately wicked (Jer. 17:9) – or is it entirely different from that? How do we get a strong, gorgeous, pure heart? Enjoy!*

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Hi everyone. I’m Philip Shields. How’s your heart? Surely, we all agree the heart must surely be the most important organ of the human body, along with one’s brain. **Leviticus 17:11** says “for the life of the flesh is in the blood” and blood is governed and controlled by our hearts. In the Old Testament the Hebrew for heart is “leb” and in Greek New Testament it is “cardia” – where even today we talk about cardiac arrests, and so on.

In fact, spiritually, we are supposed to have a heart like God’s own heart – and a mind like Christ’s (“Let this mind be in you, which was in Christ...” – Phil 2:5). The 2 most important organs – both physically and spiritually are to be like God’s own heart and mind.

Well, our hearts – spiritually – are also particularly important to God so the heart is mentioned over 800 times in scripture! Our heart – depicting spiritually our INNERMOST self, what we really are deep inside -- is critical to God.

My sermon today is based on Matthew 5:8 – one of the Beatitudes – “Blessed are the PURE IN HEART, for THEY shall see God.”

In God’s word, one’s HEART stands for our inner man, our inner self, what we *really* are like inside. **It’s the seat of all sin (Matthew 15:18-20). Yeshua says that from the heart proceed evil thoughts – which lead to actions of murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, lying, blasphemies.**

But a PURE heart is also the seat of beautiful godly living as well. For out of the heart of the righteous proceed blessings, good works, right living.

Some people have duplicitous hearts, meaning sometimes it seems wonderful – and other times heart can surprise even ourselves how evil it can be.

Your heart is what God looks at to see if we're accepting and turning to his righteousness or not. Our hearts can also be influenced by God – as when we're told in Exodus several times that “*God hardened Pharaoh's heart*” (Ex. 9:12; 10:1, 20, 27; 11:10; 14:8) . But then again, there are many scriptures that say Pharaoh hardened HIS OWN heart (Ex. 8:15, 32; 9:34).

There are also many scriptures where God stirs up the hearts of various ones – like emperor Cyrus, like Zerubbabel and Joshua to rebuild the temple, and more. Ask God to help you recognize when he's trying to get our attention and stir something inside us.

So hello again, everyone. I'm Philip Shields, founder and host of Light on the Rock, and assisted so well by Scott and Brandie Doucet who post the audios and produce the new videos we're doing. **I'm going to do this one as an audio and will probably do 2/3 video and 1/3 audio going forward**, so be sure to check both, OK? And thanks for coming to Light on the Rock.org. If our sermons are blessing you, helping you – please tell others about us as well. We have close to 300 sermons on here!

Also be watching out for **new BLOGS** – short reads about Bible and world news events you'll find timely and important. Check out the last few we've posted and last few sermons also.

BACK TO THE HEART!...

Your “heart” represents “the real YOU”, our true character, our motivation, our attitude – and so Yeshua said things like “for out of the abundance/overflow of the heart the mouth speaks” (Matthew 12:34) and “where your treasure is, your heart will be also” (Luke 12:34).

GOD the Father is looking for rulers and priests to reign with his Son, to marry his Son, and what he looks for has never changed. When God told Samuel to go anoint one of Jesse's sons – we'll read it later – he said he was looking for a man who had a heart like His own heart... a man according to God's own heart.

THAT has not changed. You and I, future kings and priests with Christ, will ALSO need to be people who have hearts according to God's own heart (1 Sam. 13:13-14; Acts 13:22)

God says he will write his law into our hearts (our innermost beings!) in the future.

Peter tells women not to focus on outward beauty of what they wear, which shoes to put on, what jewelry to display and how they look in the mirror – but they do – “but rather let it **be the hidden person of the HEART**, with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God. 5 For in this manner, in former times, the holy women who trusted in God also adorned themselves...” (1 Peter 3:3-4).

Ladies, God wants you focusing on having a gorgeous HEART.

And it's clear that God wants MEN with beautiful, pure hearts too! So do we have a beautiful, CLEAN and PURE heart? Do I? God would much rather that we be physically unattractive – but have wonderful, clean, pure, open, loving, GORGEOUS hearts to God!

SO I want to focus on one today – the HEART. “Blessed are the pure in heart, for THEY shall see God.” (Matthew 5:8).

Leading Causes of Death in the USA – this table is from 2017. What do you think the #1 cause of death would be in America today?

- **Heart disease: 647,457**
- Cancer: 599,108
- Accidents (unintentional injuries): 169,936
- Chronic lower respiratory diseases: 160,201
- Stroke (cerebrovascular diseases): 146,383
- Alzheimer's disease: 121,404
- Diabetes: 83,564
- Influenza and pneumonia: 55,672
- Intentional self-harm (suicide): 47,173

Source: [Deaths: Leading Causes for 2017, table 1.pdf icon\[PDF- 2 MB\]](#)

IN a close 2nd is death from all cancers. Deaths from Accidents - #3.

But if we add up ALL the deaths by accidents, add all the suicide deaths, all the pneumonia deaths, all the diabetes deaths, all the Alzheimer's deaths, and all the deaths from Strokes – THEY ALL COMBINED STILL come up to less than the deaths from heart related diseases alone!

Let that sink in. More deaths come from heart trouble – than all of those others I just mentioned -- combined! So how's *your* heart? Spiritually how's your heart?

If you have heart disease, it's profoundly serious. I've had chest pains in the past and was even hospitalized for chest pains in 2019. One thing I know: we want a healthy heart.

My dad – Clyde Shields, a missionary to the Philippines, worked so hard at his Mission church, called Miracle Church and his school, called Miracle Bible Institute in San Fernando, La Union on island of Luzon. But one day he thought he heard a cry that one of the dormitories was on fire and as he raced up the steep hill to the top, he had a massive heart attack. He survived that one. But he told me later it felt like an elephant standing on his chest, he said. Very painful; lots of pressure.

My dad had considerable heart damage – only 10% of his heart was functioning. He had several other heart attacks and one day he felt tired, lay down ... and died shortly after.

So our hearts are incredible machines that God built. How anyone can believe it all just evolved, is beyond me. But our hearts can be stressed, can be damaged and we can die from a bad heart. I could. You could – both physically and spiritually.

I believe in the new Millennial kingdom that's coming to reign on earth—we will look back and say – SPIRITUALLY speaking, SPIRITUAL HEART disease was also the cause of the downfall of so many.

So let's talk about that today – getting rid of spiritual heart disease and having a PURE HEART.

Matthew 5:8

“Blessed are the pure in heart, for THEY shall see God.”

It's implied that only those with a pure heart get to see God! No people with IMPURE dirty hearts will be in God's presence. So do you want to be in God's presence and SEE God sometime?

Hebrews 12:14-16 adds that only those living in peace and in holiness will see God. That's all part of being pure hearted as well.

*Someone full of deceit, guile, hypocrisy, who has lying lips and is PROFANE and unholy – will not stand before God. Not in those conditions! There will have to be massive repentance and change first. If you want to **read Psalm 15** – a short psalm, sometime, it DESCRIBES the kind of people who will be able to live in God's presence. All the words in that psalm describe someone with a pure heart.*

DEFINING “PURE in HEART”

SO what is a pure heart?

Someone with a pure heart is someone who

- **has a great attitude and pure motives. Pure intentions. He or she is up front; no deceit, no guile. **What we're really like in our heart of hearts.****
- **Pure-hearted *doesn't* mean we're living and behaving 100% perfectly, all the time.** King David certainly wasn't perfect. But when pure hearted people sin, or behave badly, their hearts smite them. More on this later. But being pure-hearted is tied actually to the meaning behind the days of Unleavened Bread: what you see is what you get, with “unleavened” people. Little or no hypocrisy (NO ONE always does 100% what they claim to believe.)
- **A pure hearted person is not 2-faced. Pure-hearted people are the same person when they're all by themselves, or far from anyone who knows them – as they are when worshipping and singing in church with lots of people they know.**
- **Pure hearts are people whose heart is IN what they're doing and saying.** When we come before God in worship – or any time really –all the time really – he wants ‘ALL your heart’ – nothing held back.

In fact isn't that the first great commandment from Yehovah for all of us? He wants our heart to be in worshipping him. He wants us ALL IN, from our innermost being.

Deuteronomy 6:4-6

"Hear, (Shema Yisrael) O Israel: YHVH our God, YHVH *echad* (alone; is one)!

5 **You shall love YHVH your Elohim with all your HEART, with all your soul,** and with all your strength.

6 "And these words which I command you today **shall be in your HEART.**"

But as I watch and look around when I'm with brethren, I don't always see a lot of brethren with a lot of genuine gusto for YHVH. And sometimes I'm one of them! Can you admit that? We have to recognize when we're slipping, when we're not giving full attention we should to the things of God – especially times we're slipping into sin or behavior we'll be regretting later.

Let's face it. Some of us – sometimes – get bored, or feel little energy some days toward church services, or prayer, or even worship, or helping that widow wracked with pain who needs help with her yard Or we lack the stamina to worship our Creator with gusto! Sometimes we're discouraged and feel in a pit we can't get out of – for a while. But our God asks us to get back to giving him 100%.

Our Husband Yeshua had tough words for some of the churches of Rev 2 and 3. **Laodicea** (Revelation 3:14-22) **was lukewarm, ho-hum.** But they thought they weren't too bad. They didn't please God that way, for sure. Our God wants us to be either all in or all out, or as he put it: "I wish that you were either hot or cold". But they were miserable, poor, blind and naked – and didn't see it. I hope WE see we're not always giving 100% to God and may be Laodicean in attitude – as we start to slip in our words and conduct.

And the first group, **Ephesus** (Revelation 2:1-7) had done lots of zealous work for God, -- but God said: "you've lost your first love" and he urges them to get back to the "on fire" zealous way they used to be. They were still serving God – but just not with any fire left in their hearts. They were like a wife who served the family, as she did the chores, ironed the shirts, washed the floors, cooked the meals and did the dishes – but her HEART wasn't in it anymore. As a song years ago said, "you don't close your eyes anymore when I kiss your lips..." She had "lost that lovin' feeling..." and even loving was more a matter of doing her duty, than because she was still madly in love with her husband.

So be sure that's not you and me we're talking about here.

In these Bible end-time days – and we ARE living "in Bible days" – we all need to repent of our lethargy, repent of our lack of wholeheartedness, repent of our Laodiceanism, repent of our lack of gusto and our HEART not in our work for Christ – and get back to wholeheartedly worshipping YHVH. We need to wholeheartedly put away from our lives all areas that distract us and make us fall short of pleasing Him. *Yes, I preach to myself too!*

What else can we say? Someone with a pure heart is NOT being treacherous or dishonest or conniving. Is that you? All the time?

Just like someone with a bad human heart of flesh can SEEM OK – but then next thing you know they're having a heart attack, that's the same thing spiritually. That could be ME. That could you be YOU. That certainly was my father and other men I've known – as far as their physical hearts went at least.

The PROBLEM

But herein is the problem: God says that all of us humans naturally and carnally at first at least, have a heart that is deceitful, wicked and hostile to our Maker. It's the very opposite of PURE hearts – and desperately wicked. What gives? Let's read it.

Jeremiah 17:9-10

"The heart is deceitful above all things,

And desperately wicked; Who can know it?

10 I, YHVH, search the heart, I test the mind, (CJB: INNER motivations)

Even to give every man according to his ways,

According to the fruit of his doings." (CJB: what his actions and conduct deserve").

Romans 8:7-8 NKJV

"Because **the carnal mind is enmity against God**; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be. 8 So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God."

Here's how another translation puts it:

Romans 8:7-8 Holman Apologetics Study Bible

"For the mind-set of the flesh is **hostile to God** because it does not submit itself to God's law, **for it is unable to do so**. 8 Those whose lives are in the flesh are unable to please God."

But then Paul clarifies in verse 9 that we who have God's spirit are not "in the flesh, but in the spirit" – and implying that we who are in the spirit can please God and DO please God. (A good couple sermons that would go well with this one are the sermons I've given on the fact that we must have and live in the GIFT of God's righteousness. Just do a search on the home page "Gift of YHVH's righteousness" or "Righteousness – yours or God's.")

So we're seeing the problem and hints as to what must be done to get to the point where our hearts are PURE.

God wants to know, and He needs to be sure that we have turned from hostility towards him to a HEART that profoundly loves him – which includes loving people and obeying him. Do the things we DO show Him that we want to know him intimately, or do we show we're really distant from him, in fact? Paul said his one big goal was to know that he had come to really know Christ and the power of his resurrection (Philippians 3:8-11). Our relationship with Christ is to end up being married to him – and he wants a loving marriage, which means our hearts are in the courtship now and will be after the wedding. (See/hear my recent sermons on the Marriage of the Lamb.)

Law of first mention: The FIRST time a key word is used in the Bible is often significant. Let's look at the first 3 times "heart" is used. Any idea? We've already seen that the natural carnal heart is against God, is evil and can't submit itself to God.

The first time "heart" is mentioned is in Genesis 6, comparing men's hearts to the heart of God.

Genesis 6:5-6

"Then YHVH saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, **and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.**

6 And YHVH was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and **He was grieved in His heart.**"

So mankind's hearts – their mind, their soul, their innermost being, their intentions – were pure evil all the time. This made YHVH be grieved in HIS heart. Elohim does not have a heart made up of ventricles and auricles and chambers beating blood; it refers to his feelings about things, his intentions, his desires, his innermost thoughts as well.

After God's flood (not "Noah's flood"), here's something else we learn -- the 3rd time "Heart" is mentioned in the Bible.

Genesis 8:20-21

"Then Noah built an altar to YHVH, and took of every clean animal and of every clean bird, and offered burnt offerings on the altar.

21 And YHVH smelled a soothing aroma. **Then YHVH said in His heart,** "I will never again curse the ground for man's sake, although the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth; nor will I again destroy every living thing as I have done."

Soon after that, Elohim YHVH gave mankind a symbol of God's promise to never again annihilate all life by a flood, as he put the His, God's own covenant symbol in the sky – the colors of the **rainbow**. Woe to those who use God's covenant symbol for unholy movements and attitudes.

God is not interested much in how we look to each other. He does not judge on outward appearance. When Elohim was looking for a new king to replace Saul, He sent Samuel to the house of Jesse in Bethlehem to find a new king among his sons. You remember what happened. And this was the determining scripture and guideline God uses to pick a ruler:

1 Samuel 16:6-7

So it was, when they came, that he (Samuel) looked at Eliab and said, "Surely YHVH's anointed is before Him!"

7 But YHVH said to Samuel, "**Do not look at his appearance or at his physical stature,** because I have refused him. For YHVH does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, **but YHVH looks at the HEART.**"

So guess what, folks? God does not change (Malachi 3:6). For future kings and rulers and priests – he still is looking at the heart – your heart and my heart.

WHAT DOES GOD MEAN – TO "LOOK UPON THE HEART?"

So how are we doing? God's looking at our hearts. Not just what we DO... but our HEART. What does that mean?

It means he's looking at *how we really feel inside* about what we say and do. Our thoughts and feelings cause our actions. "The heart" is what our intentions and motives are.

- **Acts of service – are you doing good things so you look GOOD to others, to the brethren, as you arrive early to set up chairs or serve the congregation or community at large in other ways?** Ananias and Sapphira

Acts 5:1-10. They had sold some property and let it get out that they were donating every penny to help the church – but that wasn't true. Their heart was muddled.

Notice what it says about the 144,000 on the sea of Glass in heaven, by the way, in contrast:

Revelation 14:5

"...And in their mouth **was found no deceit, for they are without fault** before the throne of God".

- This is why we're told that **God loves a CHEERFUL GIVER – people who help or contribute willingly and cheerfully without fanfare and praise.** We might write a big check for the holy day offering but we're really wishing we could use it to buy ourselves a gift we've wanted for so long. Or let's not be like the Pharisees who literally sounded a trumpet when they'd donate to the temple or do charitable deeds (read Matthew 6:2) to receive praise for what they did.

2 Corinthians 9:6-9 Holman Apologetics Study Bible

"Remember this: the person who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and the person who sows generously will also reap generously.

7 Each person should do **as he has decided in his heart**—not out of regret or out of necessity, **for God loves a cheerful giver.**

8 And God is able to make every grace overflow to you, so that in every way, always having everything you need, you may excel in every good work."

- **Why Christ described Pharisees doing their good deeds – as being like whitewashed tombs,** but inside were decaying dead men's bones. This should speak to every single one of us! To me too! This speaks of hypocrisy. We all have SOME level of hypocrisy, by the way, because none of us lives *perfectly* yet, all the time, by the code and beliefs we say we believe.

Matthew 23:27-28

"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! **For you are like whitewashed tombs which indeed appear beautiful outwardly,** but inside are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness. 28 Even so you also outwardly appear righteous to men, but inside you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.

So all the above reveal GUILTY, reveal an impure heart, false motives, wrong agendas and hypocrisy. And yes, I preach to myself on all of this too!

Our WORSHIP, PRAYER time, Bible study time – have to become priorities, showing we are seeking our Creator with all our heart and soul.

GOD WANTS OUR HEART. The Proverbs are full of that sentiment.

"My son, GIVE ME your heart . . ." – Proverbs 23:26

So we have a problem. We are human. We are still flesh and blood. We still have human, carnal nature, which Paul said is hostile to God. Paul told the Corinthian SAINTS – "for you are carnal" (1 Cor. 3:3-4). Paul admitted his OWN carnality, "I am carnal, sold under sin" (Romans 7:14). And carnal hearts are wicked, Jeremiah tells us (Jer 17:9).

Paul also explains that really, we children of God with God's spirit, have TWO NATURES now inside us – the original sinful nature and the new nature from God and these 2 fight one another as **Gal. 5:16-24** explains. But I get ahead of myself.

SOLVING THE PROBLEM – HOW do we get a PURE heart?

THE PROBLEM

We need a pure heart to see God. But natural mankind has a desperately wicked heart. So what needs to happen?

We now routinely can replace or transplant human physical hearts. We give someone a new heart – often made up of animal parts or hearts. The first heart transplant was quite newsworthy. It was described as a miracle when South African doctor -- **Dr. Christiann Bernard**, with a 30-man team in Dec 1967 REPLACED the heart of 55-year-old Lewis Washkansky.

The Solution: We need a NEW HEART! WE need a heart transplant! David knew he had been given a new heart after Samuel anointed him, for God gave him the Holy Spirit (1 Samuel 16:13). But his heart had become corrupted and jaded by the sins he let himself do – the murder of Uriah after David's adultery with Uriah's wife, was chief among them. In Psalm 51, David repents and notice what one of his cries to God was:

Psalms 51:9-11

"Hide Your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities.

**10 CREATE in me A CLEAN HEART, O God,
And renew a steadfast spirit within me.**

11 Do not cast me away from Your presence,
And do not take Your Holy Spirit from me."

Note: there is one Creator. He creates our heart. He creates the new, clean heart we all want to have. We cannot create our own clean and pure heart on our own power and efforts, try as we might. David could have said, "No worries, God, I'll start cleaning up my heart and I'll have a beautiful new clean heart for you to see in a week, just watch me." But that's so wrong and David knew better.

I realize James says, "Cleanse your hands you sinners, and purify your hearts" (James 4:7-8) but read the verse before and after that. We have to be fighting and resisting Satan and to draw near to God. Of course! Even when God gives us new, pure clean hearts, we have to guard our hearts and keep dirt and impurities out! It's so easy to relax with sin and to let sin invade what once was a pristine heart. God is the source of new clean hearts and it's when we're close to him that we're exercising our spiritual hearts.

Ezekiel 36:24-27

"For I will take you from among the nations, gather you out of all countries, and bring you into your own land. 25 Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols.

26 I will give you A NEW HEART and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. 27 I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them”.

Let me make something clear: when God gives you HIS new heart, THAT heart is not deceitful and desperately wicked! THAT HEART is good and wants to obey, wants to worship. The problem is, for now, we still also have the other nature, the other heart – and these 2 natures war against each other. But it's the OLD HEART that is wicked. But our new heart should not be wicked. It's from GOD.

Proof: David said he now *delights* in God's law (Psalm 119:35, 70; Psalm 40:8). But the old heart we have inside – alongside the new heart/attitudes from God – is still hostile to God. Even Paul, while decrying his slipups in Romans 7, also admits in Romans 7:22 “For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man.” – the real Paul, the HEART.

Once we have that Holy Spirit and new heart, we have to fight any attempts by Satan to discourage us. We MUST start seeing we're in a FIGHT, a war with a series of battles. I ask you: **ARE we even AWARE and thinking each day that we're supposed to be in a fierce battle** against sin, against Satan, against wrong thoughts that we should arrest? We're supposed to put every wrong thought into captivity and obedience of Christ - **as 2 Cor. 10:5 says?** I know I have to do that much more going forward! Look for an upcoming sermon on being in a real FIGHT of our lives and so much more aware and engaged in it.

Once we have that new heart, we have to guard it and protect it as the precious gift it is from God. If we're not even fighting sin each day – we're toast, folks. There's some great advice in Proverbs 4:23-27.

Proverbs 4:23-27 CJB

“Above everything else, GUARD YOUR HEART; for it is the source of life's consequences.

24 Keep crooked speech out of your mouth; Banish deceit from your lips.

25 Let your eyes look straight ahead; Fix your gaze on what lies in front of you.

*26 Level the path for your feet, **let all your ways be properly prepared;***

27 then deviate neither right nor left; and keep your foot far from evil.”

Evaluate where corruption is creeping in! Remember when Yeshua told the Pharisees they were like white-washed sepulchers full of dead men's bones? Here's the rest of what he said. He didn't just rail at them but gave them a *process* to clean up! It starts with our admission we have filth to get rid of and to bring that to Christ in repentance for HIM to put on himself and wash us clean. Then the process is an INSIDE JOB....

Matthew 23:25-26

"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you cleanse the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of extortion and self-indulgence.

26 Blind Pharisee, ***first cleanse the inside of the cup and dish***, that the outside of them may be clean also.”

He's telling them, go back to GOD and repent. Get your insides clean. Ask him for a new clean heart!

THEN what happens when we sin? Our hearts will SMITE us; should smite us. For example, David knew in his heart of hearts that he shouldn't number Israel – but he did. It made him feel great about what he'd built, as he was leaving God out.

President Trump – I believe God is shaking him up. What did the President do over and over? Pres Trump *took personal credit* for the great economy, "I built the greatest economy like never before", this is "what I DID".... And that was like what happened to Nebuchadnezzar when he took credit for the glories of Babylon! God took that all away from him for a while. Pride goes before a fall (Proverbs 16:18). I pray for President Trump to repent of that and then... we'll see.

You and I have to take stock. And when we sin – our heart should smack us really good. If that's not happening, you're getting calloused to sin. After numbering Israel, look how David felt:

2 Samuel 24:9-10

"Then Joab gave the sum of the number of the people to the king. And there were in Israel eight hundred thousand valiant men who drew the sword, and the men of Judah were five hundred thousand men.

10 And David's heart condemned him after he had numbered the people. So David said to YHVH, "I have sinned greatly in what I have done; but now, I pray, O Lord, take away the iniquity of Your servant, for I have done very foolishly."

Can you sin – or have prolonged wrong thoughts or deeds or INACTION – and not be smitten in your heart? If so, you're starting to suffer from hardening of the spiritual arteries!

David paid dearly for that sin: 70,000 fellow Israelites died for that.

Where does this end? Well, God started something in you and God is faithful to finish what he started.

Philippians 1:6

"Being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ;"

Hebrews 12:1-2

"Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, **let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us**, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,

2 looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God."

But don't make it hard on yourself – or on GOD to finish the work he's started in you! **Because David's HEART was right most of the time, even when he sinned, God was able to work with him.** Get your heart right – and life is so much better. When things aren't going well, check your HEART. Have a heart checkup with God.

PURE HEARTED PEOPLE have a heart like God's own heart

One of the GREATEST THINGS said about a man was God's estimation of David, the youngest son of Jesse: **He was "a man after GOD'S OWN HEART."** The original actually says, "a man according to God's own heart."

1 Samuel 13:13-14

And Samuel said to Saul, "You have done foolishly. You have not kept the commandment of YHVH your God, which He commanded you. For now YHVH would have established your kingdom over Israel forever. 14 But now your kingdom shall not continue. **YHVH has sought for Himself a man after His own heart**, and YHVH has commanded him to be commander over His people, because you have not kept what YHVH commanded you."

Later Paul was recounting this story:

Acts 13:22-23

And when He (God) had removed him (Saul), He raised up for them David as king, to whom also He gave testimony and said, **'I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after My own heart, who will do all My will.'**

What a great testimony. But was David perfect? NO. Did David always do God's will? Obviously not. That's strangely comforting – that again, God looks at our INTENTIONS, our desires, where our hearts are – and realizes we are but flesh, and knows the spirit is willing but the flesh is weak, as Yeshua himself said.

KEEPING our hearts healthy

But David also repented deeply when he sinned. David also did all the things we all must do to have and keep a HEALTHY heart!

- **EXERCISE** the heart in a healthy way. We have to do acts of kindness, exercise.
- **Resistance training – we should be actively fighting evil and wrong thoughts. Like weight training... are you ever actually fighting evil?**

Mark 7:20-23

And He said, "What comes out of a man, that defiles a man. 21 **For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil** thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, 22 thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lewdness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness. 23 All these evil things come from within and defile a man."

God loves you and me so much, that **He'll do whatever it takes to get us purified and redeemed.** Some of us may have to go through the furnace of affliction to come out pure gold or pure silver with all the dross removed – like the **Laodiceans**. GOD WILL FINISH what he started in you (Philippians 1:6, 11).

We can either be close to God now, and perfecting holiness in the fear of God – or let God do it later in the Great Tribulation.

- Physical hearts don't handle stress well. Same thing spiritually. Get negative STRESS – and worries – out of your life. Live by FAITH in God. No stress.
- **EAT right for the heart.** SO David meditated on God's law and God's words constantly. Read Psalm 119. Feed on the milk of the word, and strong meat too.

1 Peter 2:1-3

“Therefore, laying aside all malice, all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and all evil speaking, 2 as newborn babes, **desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby.** 3 if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is gracious.”

Paul later adds that we add to that the solid food that we may grow thereby” – **Hebrews 5:12-13.**

ARE we in God's word enough? Or do we spend more time on TV or Facebook? Or maybe it's our hobbies that gobble up our time and rob God of our best time.

- **Get REST and peace and quiet.** David knew about that. Your heart won't work well if you don't get enough rest and quiet. Turn off constant NOISE, talk shows, news, or music. Sometimes just have quiet times of meditation with God.

I love going to the Lanai at night by myself before going to bed. No sounds – no noise, no sounds – except hearing the crickets or frogs -- just God's creation. And there I commune with God. It's great for my heart – both physically and spiritually.

If we do these things after we receive our new heart – and fight the cravings of the old heart we still also have inside us – we will grow in purity of heart. And we will see God, as 1 John 3:2-3 clearly tells us.

I'm talking to you, to me, to all of us. We've GOT to wake up and get our HEARTS back into things with God and Yeshua. We've got to go for a long walk, then write down some new goals such as

- when and how we pray. I am starting to NOT pray a main prayer the very last thing in the day when I'm so sleepy and tired already – but earlier in the night and earlier in the morning too. I want to give my God a time when I'm able to focus on him and be more attentive and alert.

WHAT'S IMPORTANT to you? What do you value most? “For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also” – Matthew 6:21.

- How's **your Bible study** doing? Do you even crack open the Bible every single day anymore? Are you sure? **When do you meditate? When did you last FAST? What do your answers say about your HEART?**
- How are your **acts of service** doing? What were your last 5 and when? It could be just calling people who need someone to vent on; or send encouraging notes. But remember Paul teaches us that we can do all these acts of service, and **“bestow all my goods to feed the poor, but have not love, it profits me NOTHING.”** (1 Cor. 13:3). If our heart's not in it, it doesn't mean a whole lot. Or if you're doing it to be seen of

men (Matthew 23:5) and praised, that's also the wrong motivation, the wrong heart too. Our acts of service have to be motivated by the right heart.

- **How brightly is your light shining to those around you** as the world gets darker and darker, God's children's lights need to be shining brighter than ever by our words of encouragements, acts of kind service to all those around us.

Time is short. God is looking for kings and rulers and priests for his kingdom. Remember – he looks upon the heart. And he's looking at yours and mine right now, as he decides on WHO will be doing what, and who will be kings and priests and who will not.

I hope I've given us all a lot of food for thought – and we'll all make course corrections soon and get a new heart, and re-evaluate our entire lives and see where our hearts are.

I've been spending time lately checking my daily routines, my attitudes, my heart, my agendas, what matters to me, where I'm putting my time – because I want to be, when it's all said and done, a MAN after God's own heart.

I want to have a PURE heart, for those are the ones who shall see God (Matthew 5:8).

Closing prayer on audio.