

## Purer In Heart, O God

*by John Isaac Edwards*

The Scriptures often speak of a clean or pure heart. Residents of heaven include “He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart...” (Ps. 24:4). The Psalmist stated, “Truly God is good to Israel, even to such as are of a clean heart” (Ps. 73:1). Jesus taught, “Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God” (Mt. 5:8). Paul wrote Timothy, “Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart...” (1 Tim. 1:5). I’m bringing to our attention seven things we can do to help ourselves be purer in heart.

1) **Pray.** When Nathan the prophet came unto David, after he had gone in to Bathsheba, David’s petition was: “Create in me a clean heart, O God...” (Ps. 51:10). A good prayer is couched in the words of the beloved hymn by Mrs. A.L. Davison: “Purer in heart O God, help me to be; May I devote my life Wholly to Thee. Watch Thou my wayward feet, Guide me with counsel sweet; Purer in heart, Help me to be.”

2) **Take Heed To God’s Word.** Psalm 119 asks, “Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way?...” The answer: “...by taking heed thereto according to thy word” (v. 9). In verse 11, the

Psalmist declared, “Thy word have I hid in mine heart...” Why did you hide the Lord’s word in your heart? “...that I might not sin against thee.” God’s word in our heart will keep impurity out as it serves as a safeguard against sin! Have you considered the purity of God’s word? It is “...very pure...” (Ps. 119:140). “The words of the Lord are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times” (Ps. 12:6). May it be said of us, “But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night” (Ps. 1:1-2).

3) **Keep The Right Company.** Who we choose as our associates and friends has its influence upon us: good or bad! The Lord warned Israel of the corrupting influence of the inhabitants of the land, saying, “...thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor shew mercy unto them: Neither shall thou make marriages with them...For they will turn away thy son from following me...” (Dt. 7:1-5). Paul exhorted Timothy, “Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart” (2 Tim. 2:22). With who, Paul? “...with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.”

What kind of heart? “...a pure heart.” Some have been led astray by falling in with the wrong crowd! “Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you” (2 Cor. 6:17). Let’s see the value of making friends of God’s children!

4) **Have Purpose Of Heart.** Remember Daniel, the young man taken away captive from his homeland to a strange country, among strange people, who spoke a strange language and given a strange name? When in Babylon, do as the Babylonians, right? Not this youth! It is reported, “But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself...” (Dan. 1:8). The king’s provisions would have compromised Daniel’s purity. So, he “... requested of the prince of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself” (Dan. 1:8). Would you have done that? Daniel had a set or determined mind, and so must we! There are things today that defile as our Lord taught, “But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies: These are the things which defile a man...”

(Mt. 15:18-20). Let's make up our mind right now, that we're not going to engage in any activity that will undermine our purity.

### 5) *Think On Pure Things.*

We are what we think. "For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he..." (Prov. 23:7). As well, we say what we think. "...for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh" (Mt. 12:34). Therefore, to have a clean mouth and a pure life, we must do as Paul instructed the Philippians: "... whatsoever things are pure... think on these things" (Phil. 4:8). Our thoughts are made up of what we hear and see. Jesus warned, "Take heed what ye hear..." (Mk. 4:24) and John taught concerning, "...the lust of the eyes..." (1 Jn. 2:16). What kind of lyrics ring out through our earbuds? What are we seeing on the computer, tablet, smartphone, television or theater screen? Remember the old computer adage — garbage in, garbage out! Let's keep the garbage out by being diligent heart-keepers! "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life" (Prov. 4:23).

### 6) *Practice Pure Religion.*

James greeted scattered saints with these words: "Pure religion

and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world" (Jas. 1:27). Do some visiting! One thing that will separate the sheep from the goats come judgment day is visiting or the lack thereof (Mt. 25:31-46). Maintain the proper relationship with the world. We must, "...be not conformed to this world: but be transformed..." (Rom. 12:2), knowing "...that the friendship of the world is enmity with God..." (Jas. 4:4). John recorded, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world..." (1 Jn. 2:15). We lose our purity when we become world-spotted!

7) *Obey The Truth.* The recipe for purity calls for truth-obedience! Peter addressed scattered strangers, "Seeing ye have purified your souls..." Peter, we have a question for you: How did these people purify their souls? "...in obeying the truth..." (1 Pet. 1:22). Truth is so vitally important! "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (Jn. 8:32). As Pilate asked, "What is truth?" (Jn. 18:38), many today seem to have difficulty determining truth. Do

you know what truth is? The Bible echoes back the answer in the prayer of Jesus to the Father: "...thy word is truth" (Jn. 17:17). To be pure, we must obey the word of God! We do this initially by hearing and believing the word of God (Rom. 10:13-17), repenting of our sins (Rom. 2:4), confessing our faith in the Son of God (Rom. 10:9-10) and being buried with Christ in baptism (Rom. 6:3-4). We continue by being "...stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord..." (1 Cor. 15:58), "... faithful unto death..." (Rev. 2:10).

Heaven is depicted as a pure place — a place of "...pure gold..." (Rev. 21:18, 21) with "... a pure river of water of life..." (Rev. 22:1) — reserved for pure people — "And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life" (Rev. 21:27). Is your name written there?

**On a scale of 1-10,  
how pure are we?  
1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10**

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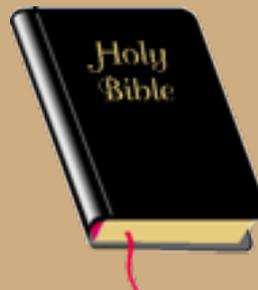
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