
HEART PURITY

A SERMON

REV. E. A. FERGERSON

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HEART PURITY

A SERMON

BY

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HEART PURITY.

1. What is It? 2. How Obtained? 3. The Results it Brings.

TEXT.—Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently.

—I Peter 1:22



Heart Purity



FIRST: Heart purity will be heaven's requisite and demand upon entrance there.

Whatever else we may or may not have, without this priceless gem we shall be denied entrance.

Christian, or heart purity, as the great evangelical fact of holiness, is the extirpation of *all sin* in principle from the soul, or the absence of all pollution in the heart of a believer, and stands forth prominently throughout all the Scriptures.

Nor does it consist so much of what is in the heart, as what is not in the heart. "*Cleansed from all sin.*" Of course, impurity is removed from the soul only by the positive presence of the Holy Ghost working in it. I believe it is Rev. Richard Watson who says: "The absence of all evil is necessarily the presence of all good."

When the soul is cleansed it is not *vacated*. All

the graces of the Spirit remain in it. The positive virtues, perfect in *number*, are all important to the soul in regeneration; and the *cleansing*—the negative implies the positive, for when remaining impurity is removed these graces remain, existing in simplicity, *perfect in quality*.

In the heart is the true fountain of all evil, and there the sanctification of man must begin and be completed. A “pure heart” is one that is cleansed from all indwelling sin, and is *morally clean* and right before God.

The heart is the seat of moral action—of good or evil—of sin or Holiness. It is that in man of which *moral character, or moral quality* may be predicted.

To be pure is literally to be clean, clear, unmixed, and undefiled. Like the sunbeam, or in other words, like the strained honey. To have no part dark, but to be clean clear through, and clear through clean. It implies the extirpation of all unholy desires, imaginations, tendencies, and affections.

Heart purity is the negative side of Holiness.

True holiness implies the presence of all the positive graces and virtues in the heart, to the *exclusion of their opposite vices*, as love without hatred, submission without rebellion, faith without unbelief, humility without pride, meekness without anger, patience without impatience, and peace without strife.

Purity in the Scripture is applied to "linen," to "water" and to "gold."

"Pure and white linen," is *untarnished* and *unstained* linen.

"Pure water" is that which is *clean and clear*. "Pure gold" is that which is *unmixed* and without tin, dross, or alloy. Hebrews 10:22; Rev. 15:6; 21:18. A pure heart implies a cleansing farther back and deeper down than outward purity; the soul itself washed from all defilement so as to be free from all impurity, resulting in an irreproachable conscience and a holy life.

The negative aspect of Holiness, which is purity, is a fixed condition or state. It does not ad-

mit of comparison or enlargement. While on the other hand the positive side admits of advancement, development, and enlarging. Purity pertains to *quality*, and growth to size or *quantity*. Anything that is pure, can't be purer than pure.

As purity is the negative part of salvation, and perfect love the positive, these blessings are concomitant, and enter into the heart at the same time. As the absence of all disease in the body means the presence of perfect health, so, the absence of all sin in the heart means the presence of perfect holiness. Hence the folly of one's saying, I take it by faith and I am waiting for the witness. The very moment you exercise perfect faith, that moment the blessing comes, and you have the witness in your heart. The bringing a lamp into a dark room excludes the darkness the moment of entering. As one comes in the other goes out.

Now, one may say, I took it by faith and it was so many hours or days before the blessing came. Well, the truth is, you may have thought you had

faith, and indeed you did, but that faith was not perfect, for the very moment it was perfected the blessing came. No, light and darkness can't stay in the same room at once.

Purity is not the capacity, or strength, or development of the soul, but is its freedom from sin. These items may be associated with purity, but they do not constitute its identity. Just as physical health does not consist in size and weight or strength of body, but its freedom from disease; although these items may be associated with health, yet they do not constitute its identity.

“Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the *truth*.”

Many hear and know the truth, but are not purified by it, because they do not submit to it, or obey it.

The Gospel is called “*the truth*.” It proclaims the great *uncleanness* of the soul, and its *Divine remedy*.

“Sanctify them through *thy truth*, *thy word is truth*.”

“Now ye are *clean* through the *word* which I have spoken unto you.”

Now notice the text says: “Seeing ye have purified your souls.” In what way do we understand this to be done—to purify our souls? We purify ourselves by submitting, and giving ourselves over to God, just as we would give our soiled clothes over to the laundryman to be washed. In this sense we purify ourselves. In other words, our souls are purified in “*obeying the truth.*” The word of God is here represented as the *instrument* of our purification.

Second: Now, let us notice briefly how a pure heart is obtained.

In Acts 15:8, 9, Peter tells us that our hearts are “*purified by faith.*” Ninth verse, “And put no difference between us, and them, purifying their hearts by faith.”

Faith in the blood is the channel through which comes the cleansing. John says, “If we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship

one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son *cleanseth us from all sin.*"

Obedience and faith bring us into the realm of knowledge. The blood is efficacious. "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who, through the eternal Spirit, offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" Heb. 9:14. A purged conscience is one that is pure. "The end of the commandment is love out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned." A pure heart brings a good conscience and unfeigned faith.

The above Scripture quoted from Hebrews, with its context, teaches that the sacrifices of the old dispensation could not purge the conscience, and take away the guilt and the defilement of sin, but at best could only "sanctify to the purifying of the flesh." That is, free the man from ceremonial uncleanness, and typify and point to the "Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."

The cleansing efficacy of Christ's blood, offered without spot to God, is sufficient to "purge the conscience from dead works," and reach the very heart defiled with sin, and remove all uncleanness," "and renew the soul in righteousness and true holiness."

Just as His vicarious death was offered without spot to God, He can so purify the soul that it will be "*without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing.*" And mark you, the recipient of a pure heart gets it only through faith in the blood of Christ, and never in any other way.

Paul, in I Tim. 3:9, speaks of "holding the mystery of faith in a *pure conscience.*"

"Faith, mighty faith, the promise sees,
And looks to that alone:
Laughs at impossibilities,
And cries, 'It shall be done!'

"I wait till he shall touch me clean,
Shall life and power impart,
Give me the faith that casts out sin,
And purifies the heart."—*Wesley.*

This kind of faith climbs over ceremonies, ordinances, theories, symbols, types, shadows, and stops at nothing short of the throne-room on high, has audience with God, receives the application of the Blood, and is actually made partaker of His Holiness, the imparted righteousness of Christ. As holy as He is holy, in the sense of being clean, as He is clean from all sin.

“Because AS he which called you is holy, SO be ye holy in all manner of living.” (R. V.) I Peter 1:15.

This faith brings us into the experience of being as clean and holy in this world, as we will ever be in heaven a million years from now.

Third: Now let us notice for a few moments the result of being pure. “*Unto unfeigned love.*” Love that is unfeigned, is loving without effort. It springs spontaneously from the heart, and not only that, but it is fervent. Love not put on, but literally flowing out. Fervent means fiery, warm, melted.

“Love is the fulfilling of the law.”

The supreme test of all religions in the world is love.

The religion of Jesus Christ is the only religion of the world that loves and lays itself out for others. And Jesus said, “By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, *if ye have love one for another.*” John 13:35. Thus we have the great distinguishing fact and principle between the religion of Jesus Christ and other religions. And to impress this fact he gave a new commandment, that we ought to love as he loved. “That ye love one another, *as I have loved you.*” John 13:34.

“Unto *unfeigned love of the brethren.*”

“Let brotherly love continue.” “But as touching brotherly love, ye need not that I write unto you; for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another.” I Thess. 4:9. “Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity.” Psalm 133:1.

“And Abraham said unto Lot, let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and be-

tween my herdsmen and thy herdsmen, for we be brethren." Gen. 13:8. "Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honor preferring one another." Romans 12:10.

"Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than themselves." Phil. 2:3.

"And to godliness, brotherly kindness." II Peter 1:7.

"Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God." Eph. 5:21.

The above Scriptures prove conclusively that we should "walk in love," and that it should be the disinterested, unassuming, self-forgetting kind that our Lord has, for by this shall the world know that we are His disciples. God grant that we may have this kind.

Let love without dissimulation be
Mine ever to possess;
That always seeks some other's good
With truest kindness.

A love unfeigned, that's always true,
That suffereth long and is kind;
And self-forgetting, ever new,
With all lowliness of mind.

O grant that nothing in my soul
May dwell, but thy pure love alone;
Enkindled, flaming, possess me whole,
And all my life be love.

My joy, my treasure, and my crown,
My all in all with Thee is found,
Holiness, Purity, Happiness, Heaven,
Thro' Jesus Christ on earth is given.

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