

In search of...

Truth & Right

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Defining Purity

The Oxford English dictionary defines "pure" as "not mixed or adulterated with any other substance or material." Compare that with what we read in 1 Peter 1:22-25. "Having purified your souls by your obedience to the truth for a sincere brotherly love, love one another earnestly from a pure heart, since you have been born again, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and abiding word of God; for 'All flesh is like grass and all its glory like the flower of grass. The grass withers, and the flower falls, but the word of the Lord remains forever.' And this word is the good news that was preached to you."

This one passage tells us quite a lot about what it means for a person to be considered pure. Firstly, it very clearly says that one's soul is purified by faithful obedience to the truth. Pay attention to the fact that it is talking about the soul,

because of course the focus of a Christian's life is their spiritual well-being, and also because a person may be pure in soul even if their physical body is dirty or even diseased.

Not only does it specify that the soul can be pure, but it denotes how this purity is attained: through obedience. This is made clear in 1 Peter 3:21-22. "Baptism, which corresponds to this, now saves you, not as a removal of dirt from the body but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers having been subjected to him." God is not interested in the removal of dirt from the body. Rather, He loves us and instructs us on how we are to be; after all, He created us and designed us to be a certain way.

Taking all of this into

consideration, then, that God has made us and desires us to be pure, that we can and do become impure, and that purity denotes the lack of being mixed or contaminated with a foreign substance, what is it that we become infected with, do you think? The answer is obvious: SIN! Sin, by definition, is transgression of God's Law. Sin makes us impure. It separates us from God and will keep us out of Heaven.

A good way to think about this is to consider drinking water. Filters & filtration systems are abundant because people want clean, PURE water to drink. Shouldn't that be the case with our souls, our spiritual lives? Thankfully, the Lord tells us through His word exactly how we can be purified and made whole again. The crucial component of such is the blood of Jesus, the Christ, the Son of God. His blood and only His blood has the power to take away sins. "And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, saying, "Drink of it, all of you, for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins." (Matt.26:27-28)

Having established that it is His blood that takes away our sin, the impurity, what more needs to be said? Well, it also has to be understood that just because a person is obedient to the gospel, has their sins washed away, becoming a Christian, does not mean that they are

immune from temptation to sin. In fact, a sound argument can be made that Satan works his hardest to draw away those that have pledged to follow the Lord. In short, one who has once been purified by the blood of Christ can again be made impure, contaminated by sin.

So what are we to do? Here are a few thoughts to help us to know whether or not we are living in purity: Firstly, be honest with yourself. This sometimes is the hardest thing for us, because the alternative- excusing sinful behavior- is very easy. Often we seek the approval of those around us or want to be content with being "good enough" or seen as good compared to human standards & examples. Spend time in self-examination. How does your life line up with God's Word? In what ways might you be falling short? "Examine yourselves, to see whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Or do you not realize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?—unless indeed you fail to meet the test!" (2 Cor. 13:5)

Next, once you have identified the problem, a decision has to be made. Are you going to change? If so, how? Remember, this sin is polluting your life, your soul, and it makes you impure! That is not what God wants for you! And bear this in mind as well: by not deciding, you have made a choice, and you will face the consequences.

Finally, take action! You know that you have sinned, and

you are resolved to get rid of the impurity, so do something about it! The Bible has much to say regarding this: "Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working." (James 5:16) Don't hide it or keep it to yourself; ask for help. That's what our brothers and sisters in Christ are here for. But above all, go to God.

"Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin! For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight, so that you may be justified in your words and blameless in your judgment." (Psalm 51:1-4)

Look at these words of David. Are you this serious about getting rid of sin and making sure that it stays gone? Repentance is more than just a word; it is a way of life. Call to mind Acts 26:20, where Paul mentions "deeds in keeping with their repentance." God has told us what to do: confess, repent, and He will forgive. We can be pure, but we can give up that purity as well! Do not let sin stain your soul. Be who our God, our Creator, wants you to be.

Jarred Currence

Happy Moments,
Praise God.

Difficult Moments,
Seek God.

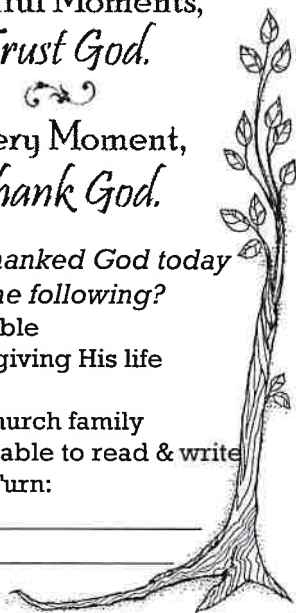
Quiet Moments,
Worship God.

Painful Moments,
Trust God.


Every Moment,
Thank God.

*Have you thanked God today
for any of the following?*

- The Bible
- Jesus giving His life for us
- Our church family
- Being able to read & write
- Your Turn:



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BIBLE Trivia!

DIRECTIONS: After searching through your Bible, circle which answer is correct.

1. **What wicked king, a dabbler in sorcery, sacrificed his son in the fire?**

- a) Ahab
- b) Manasseh
- c) Herod
- d) Agag

2. **Who confessed his denial of Jesus?**

- a) Nathanael
- b) Barnabas
- c) Judas
- d) Peter

3. **What was the first bird released from the Ark?**

- a) A chicken
- b) A dove
- c) A raven
- d) A peacock

4. **Who made sacrifices in case any of his children had sinned?**

- a) Samuel
- b) Abraham
- c) Job
- d) David

5. **What crime did the high priest charge Jesus with?**

- a) Blasphemy
- b) Insurrection
- c) Murder
- d) False Witness

6. **Who succeeded Judas Iscariot as an apostle?**

- a) Barnabas
- b) Paul
- c) Philip
- d) Matthias

7. **Who called Jesus "Rabboni"?**

- a) Martha
- b) Mary Magdalene
- c) Thomas
- d) Luke

8. **What prophet told the priest Pashur that his new name was to be Magor-missabib?**

- a) Jeremiah
- b) Ezekiel
- c) Nathan
- d) Habakkuk

9. **Who took spoils from the fallen Jericho and buried them inside his tent?**

- a) Zabdi
- b) Caleb
- c) Achan
- d) Carmi

10. **Who raised Dorcas from the dead?**

- a) Peter
- b) Jesus
- c) Paul
- d) Stephen

LAST MONTH'S ANSWERS & VERSES:

- 1) B, Reference: Ephesians 3:8
- 2) C, Reference: Ephesians 3:19
- 3) D, Reference: Ephesians 4:15
- 4) C, Reference: Ephesians 5:28
- 5) A, Reference: Ephesians 5:20

- 6) C, Reference: Ephesians 3:1
- 7) B, Reference: Esther 2:7
- 8) C, Reference: Esther 3:6
- 9) D, Reference: Exodus 4:14
- 10) D, Reference: Exodus Chapter 5