

Second Advent Service *The First Three Kings of Israel*

Text: Psalm 51:10

Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.

Theme: The King to Desired a Pure Heart

In our Sunday morning Bible class we have been looking at the Gospel of Matthew. Jesus often condemns the hypocrites in this Gospel. They are people who appear to be very pious on the outside, but their hearts are far from the Lord. God demands pure hearts, hearts that are free from any sin. So with David we pray, *“Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a right Spirit within me.”* David was the king who desired a pure heart.

I. David’s heart was not pure because of his own righteousness.

David’s anointing made the point that God does not look at the outward appearances. The people had been impressed with King Saul because he was a head taller than any other Israelite man. When Samuel saw the first of Jesse’s sons, he was sure that this was the new king, but God said that He doesn’t take the height or appearance into consideration. He considers the heart. Jesse never even considered inviting David to the feast. He was out tending the sheep, but it was this son, whom the Lord had chosen.

There were many times when David showed his heart of faith in the Lord. When he stood up against Goliath, he said, *“You come against me with sword and spear and javelin, but I come against you in the name of the Lord Almighty, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied.”* (1 Sa 17:45) Later Saul began to pursue David out of jealousy. However, David had a number of chances to kill Saul. One time when David’s companion were ready to kill Saul David said, *“Don’t destroy him! Who can lay a hand on the Lord’s anointed and be guiltless?”* (1 Sa 26:9) When David got word that his son Absalom died, the son who tried to take his throne, David lamented, *“O my son Absalom! My son, my son Absalom! If only I had died instead of you – O Absalom, my son, my son!”* (2 Sa 18:33) Later David decided to build a temple for God, but God said that He would build a house for David instead. One of his descendants would be the Savior. David relented and praised God and said, *“Do as you promised, so that it will be established and that your name will be great forever.”* (1 Chron 17:23,24) All of these are examples of the heart of David, which trusted in the Lord and sought to do his will.

But there was also sin in David’s heart. You probably know the story of when he saw Bathsheba bathing. Instead of turning away, he invited her to the palace while her husband was off to war in David’s army. She became pregnant. And David did all that he could to cover it up. He called Uriah home from the battle, but he would not even go into his home while his comrades were at war. Then David came up with a plan for Uriah to be killed in battle. David fell into the sins of adultery and murder. Probably no king in Israel’s history fell into such horrendous sin as this king who had a heart, which had trusted so firmly in God and desired to do His will. David’s heart was far from pure on its own.

But David still desired a pure heart. In his psalm of repentance he prayed, *“Surely you desire truth in the inner parts; you teach me wisdom in the inmost place. Cleanse me with hyssop, and I will be clean; wash me, and I will be whiter than snow... Hide your face from my sins and blot out all my iniquity. Create in me a pure heart O God, and renew a right spirit within me.* (Psalm 51) He confessed that he was full of sin, right from the

time that he was conceived. He had failed the God who had blessed him in so many wonderful ways. It was God alone who could cleanse him of his sin and create a pure heart in him. A pure heart was not something that he could achieve. God had to cleanse his heart of sin and make it pure through His Holy Spirit.

II. Jesus is the King whose righteousness purifies our hearts.

He never fell into a single temptation. He even followed the devil around, and the devil unleashed his biggest temptations against Jesus, but Jesus withstood them all. He was tempted in every way as we are. Yet He was without sin. The devil even worked through Simon Peter, to get Jesus to avoid the cross, but Jesus countered, *"Get thee behind me satan. You do not have in mind the things of God, but the things of men."* When Jesus was on the cross, the devil worked overtime to try to get Him to come down, but He remained until He could proclaim, "It is finished."

He desires to clothe us with His righteousness. Paul writes in 2 Cor. 5:21, *"God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God."* It is faith, that He paid for every one of our sins on the cross, which washes away our sins and clothes us with His righteousness. The One with a pure heart bids us to come to him in Matthew 11:28, *"Come to Me, all you who are weary and burdened and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest fore your souls."* This king took the guilt of our sins on Himself and gives us the gift of a pure heart through faith in Him.

III. That is the only way that we can have a pure heart.

Our deeds will never make us pure. Tonight's epistle lesson states, *"²²Flee the evil desires of youth, and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, along with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart. (2 Tim 2:22)* But so often we are like David. Rather than running away from temptation, we invite it into our homes. We dirty our hearts with all kinds of sins, of thought, word, and deeds, vile things that we become very ashamed of. None of us are perfect. We all have hearts that need a good cleansing.

Faith in Christ cleanses our hearts and makes them pure. Baptism in His name washes away our sins and clothes us with Christ. When we look to Him for forgiveness, he really does take away all of our sins. Not a single spot remains. He takes our sins and gives us pure hearts.

Those new hearts that He gives to us cannot help but teach other sinners His ways. We want to love and forgive as God in Christ has loved and forgiven us. Like David our desire is now to live our lives to the glory of Him who gave His dearest treasure to redeem us from our sins.

How is your heart? There are people who look healthy on the outside, but they are really very sick. The same is true with our spiritual lives. What's on the outside doesn't matter. What matters is that our hearts are pure. They can only be pure when like David we confess our sins and trust in the forgiveness that we have through Christ our Savior. May God grant that each of us seek pure hearts are cleansed by Christ and His forgiveness.

Amen.

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