



PURE RELIGION

By Charles Willis

Pure Religion



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“And everyone who has this hope fixed on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure” (1 John 3:3)

He is “pure.” The Greek word translated “pure” is “hagnos” meaning “properly clean, that is, (figuratively) innocent, modest, perfect: - chaste, clean, pure” (Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance #G53). God is clean and innocent. *“Like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all your behavior; because it is written ‘You shall be holy, for I am holy’”* (1 Peter 1:15-16). In a similar way the seraphim cried out “Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord of hosts” (Isaiah 6:3), which is echoed in the song of the Lamb, “For You alone are holy” (Rev. 15:4).

1. Define “Holy.” Pay attention to the similarity with the Greek word “hagnos.”
2. How do these passages describe God?
 - a. 1 John 1:5
 - b. 1 John 4:8
 - c. 1 John 5:20
 - d. Matthew 5:48
 - e. James 1:13
3. Why was Moses required to remove his sandals (Ex. 3:5)?
4. Why was God so upset with Nadab and Abihu (Lev. 10:1-3)?
5. What should be our attitude toward God since He is pure? (Heb. 12:28)
6. Explain the imagery of James 4:8 which says “cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded.”
7. Does God expect us to live in purity (1 John 3:3)? Explain. (See also Matthew 5:48; Hebrews 12:28)
8. What New Testament phrases or words (other than pure) convey the concept of our purity before God? (provide references)

Purification Of Sins

*“Can mankind be just before God? Can a man be pure before his Maker?”
(Job 4:17)*

1. Explain how Jesus “made purification of sins” (Hebrews 1:3).
2. 1 John 3:1-3 speaks of how we purify ourselves (see also 2 Timothy 2:21 “cleanses himself”). Please explain the meaning of this passage in light of the teaching in Hebrews 1:3.
3. How do we “forget” our purification from former sins (2 Peter 1:9)?
4. “Impurity” is not to be named among us (Eph. 5:3). Does this mean we must be sinless? Explain.
5. No “impure person” has inheritance in the kingdom (Eph. 5:5). The King James translates this as “unclean.” What does this mean for one who has been baptized into Christ?
6. How does the language about cleansing in 1 John 1:9 help us understand how to remain in state of purity before God? (see also Psalm 51:10)

Purity Of Heart

“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God”
(Matthew 5:8)

1. What is a “pure heart”?
2. What defiles a man (Matt. 15:19-20)?
3. What problems often result from an impure heart (Matthew 23:25-27)?
4. How do we get a pure heart (Psalm 51:10)?
5. What will those with a “pure heart” be pursuing (2 Tim. 2:22)?
6. Explain Titus 1:15.
7. How does the concept about ‘pureness of heart’ fit with Luke 10:27?
8. What was the goal of Paul’s instruction (1 Tim. 1:5)?

“Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things.”
(Philippians 4:8)

1. Please define the word “dwell” (“think” in the King James translation).
2. What benefit comes from dwelling on these things?
3. The Bible often uses “heart” in reference to the “mind” or “intellect.” What do the following references reveal about how we should think?
 - A. 2 Cor. 10:5
 - B. Mark 12:30
 - C. Rom. 7:25
 - D. James 4:8
4. What are the dangers of having impure thinking?
 - A. Titus 1:15
 - B. Matt. 15: 19
 - C. Matt. 5:28
5. The Word of God is able to “judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart” (Heb. 4:12). What then should be our attitude in our thinking?
 - A. Ps. 51:10-12
 - B. 1 Tim. 4:12
 - C. Prov. 4:23
6. Make a short list of a few thoughts which we should be careful about.

"For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body"
(1 Corinthians 6:20)

1. Examine the greater context of the above passage by reading 1 Corinthians 6:15-20. Explain how we are to glorify God in our body.

2. What is God's will for us (1 Thessalonians 4:3-8)?

3. Because these truths are so important to every generation, what additional specifics can we see in Scripture:
 - A. 1 Tim. 4:12

 - B. 1 Tim. 5:2

 - C. 2 Tim. 2:22

 - D. Eph. 5:3

4. How do we honor marriage (Hebrews 13:4)? Discuss how our society is dishonoring marriage, and thus God.

5. What responsibility do we bear toward brethren?
 - A. Heb. 12:15-16

 - B. 1 Corinthians 5:11-13

Purity Of Speech

*“No one can tame the tongue; it is a restless evil and full of deadly poison”
(James 3:8)*

1. Read James 3:6-12 and answer the following:
 - A. How is the tongue “the very world of iniquity” (v.6)?
 - B. What is meant by “restless evil” (v.8)?
 - C. If we cannot tame the tongue, how can we be pure in speech? (see also James 3:2)
 - D. What is the “cursing” in verses 9-10?
2. What do these passages indicate are impure speech?
 - A. Ephsians 4:25
 - B. Ephesians 4:29
 - C. Ephesians 5:4
 - D. 1 Tim. 3:11
 - E. Proverbs 6:19
 - F. Matthew 12:36-37
3. Where does evil speech come from (Matt. 15:18; Luke 6:45)?
4. How does God expect us to use our tongue?
 - A. James 1:26
 - B. Col. 4:6
 - C. Titus 2:8
5. How does our speech demonstrate our loyalties?
 - A. Matt. 26:73
 - B. 1 Tim. 4:12
6. Are euphemism’s a demonstration of purity of speech?

"The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love"
(1 John 4:8)

1. How is God's love described in 1 John 4:7-21?

2. How are we to "abide in love" (1 John 4:16)?

3. What is God's command to us (John 13:34)?

4. What should the attitude of heart we have toward one another?
 - A. 1 Peter 1:22

 - B. Romans 12:9-10

5. How is the pure love in our heart expressed to others?
 - A. 2 Corinthians 2:8

 - B. 1 John 3:18

 - C. Galatians 5:13

6. How are we to love the Lord (Mark 12:30-31)?

7. Explain Paul's statement in 1 Timothy 1:5.

*“In all things show yourself to be an example of good deeds,
with purity of doctrine, dignified” (Titus 2:7)*

Purity In Doctrine

1. In the context, who is to apply the teaching of Titus 2:7?
2. How can we know if our doctrine (teaching) is pure?
 - A. Galatians 1:6-10
 - B. John 12:48; 2 John 9-11
 - C. 1 John 4:1-6
 - D. 2 Thessalonians 2:15
3. What is the connection between purity in doctrine and purity of life (Ps. 119:9-11)?
4. What is meant by “sound doctrine” (1 Timothy 1:10; Titus 1:13, 2:1)?
5. What dangers must we personally watch for in regard to doctrine (2 Tim. 4:1-4)?
6. What is the elder’s role in maintaining doctrinal purity in the church (Titus 1:9; 2 Thess. 3:6, 14)
7. How do we “retain the standard of sound words” which Paul taught (2 Tim. 1:13)?
8. How does the Scriptural demand for purity in doctrine differ from modern religious views about doctrine? How will this impact our response to teaching truth? (see Matthew 15:1-9)

“Pure and undefiled religion in the sight of our God and Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world” (James 1:27)

1. Define and/or explain “pure religion” from the context of James 1:22-27. Be sure to include a definition of “religion.”
2. Based on your understanding of James 1, what would be “impure religion” or “defiled” religion?
3. How did Jesus purify for Himself a people for His own possession (Titus 2:11-14)? What kind of life do the “purified” people live?
4. How do we “purify” ourselves (1 John 3:3)?
5. What is the attitude of some about religion (Titus 1:10-16)? How is this attitude seen in the minds of many today who attend a church and think they are “religious”? (Be sure to consider yourself in this.)
6. How does the conscience relate to “pure religion”? (consider 1 Tim. 1:5; 1:19; 3:9; 2 Tim. 1:3; Heb. 9:14)
7. Discuss the implications of your understanding of “pure religion” on public and private worship .

God's Pure Wisdom

"The wisdom from above is first pure..." (James 3:17)

1. Review the context of James 3:13-18.
 - A. Define "wisdom" (3:17).

 - B. What is the "gentleness of wisdom" (3:13)?

 - C. Why is the wisdom from above "first pure" (3:17)?

 - D. How does the wisdom from above differ from the wisdom from below?

2. What must be our attitude to gain the "wisdom" of God (1 Cor. 3:18-19)?
What is this "wisdom"?

3. How does Jesus become "to us wisdom from God" (1 Cor. 1:30, see v. 20-31)?

4. How do we come to possess more of God's wisdom ?
 - A. John 15:3

 - B. James 1:5

 - C. Psalm 19:8; 119:140

How To Keep Yourself Pure

“Do not lay hands upon anyone too hastily and thereby share responsibility for the sins of others; keep yourself free from sin” (1 Timothy 5:22)

1. Explain the meaning of 1 Timothy 5:22 in the context. Does this contradict Ezekiel 18:20 which says “the righteousness of the righteous will be upon himself, and the wickedness of the wicked will be upon himself”?

2. What is God’s expectation of purity from us (1 John 3:3)?

3. How can we be holy and blameless (Eph. 5:27; 2 Pet. 3:14) if we are all sinners (Rom. 3:23)?

4. What specifics are revealed in Scripture about how we keep ourselves pure?
 - A. Prov. 4:23

 - B. 1 Cor. 15:33

 - C. 1 Thess. 5:21-22

 - D. 2 Tim. 2:22

 - E. Acts 15:29

 - F. 1 John 5:21

 - G. Jude 21