

11. 🌿 Beatitude #6

“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.”

◆ Purity of Heart: Inner Integrity and Undivided Love

In the Jewish worldview, the **heart** (*lev*) is not simply the seat of emotions—it is the **core of the human person**: the place of decision-making, desire, and covenantal fidelity. So when Jesus speaks of the “pure in heart,” He’s pointing not to surface-level piety but to an **interior coherence**—a life without duplicity or fragmentation.

The Greek phrase “**katharoi tē kardia**” carries this further:

- *Katharoi* (pure) implies **cleansed, unmixed, transparent**, like water without sediment.
- *Kardia* (heart) is the **interior self**, where thought, will, and spirit converge.

So, the “pure in heart” are those whose **interior life is wholly directed toward God**, without conflicting allegiances or ego-driven motives. Their desires are aligned. Their intentions are not split. They do not manipulate or posture or play spiritual dress-up. They live with **transparency before God and others**.

This Beatitude isn’t about naiveté or moral perfection. It’s about being *real*—free of spiritual pretense or performative religion.

◆ A Radical Promise: “They Shall See God”

This is perhaps the most startling promise of the Beatitudes. To **see God** is something Scripture often describes as impossible:

- “*No one can see My face and live*” (Exodus 33:20).
- Even Moses only glimpses God’s back.

And yet Jesus promises that those who are pure in heart *will see God*—not just in some future eschatological vision, but increasingly **in this life**, through spiritual clarity:

- Seeing God in others, especially the poor and marginalized.
- Seeing God in beauty, in suffering, in the Word.
- Seeing God in the mirror, if the heart is clean enough.

The **early mystics** and **Desert Fathers** saw purity of heart as the precondition for contemplation. *Gregory of Nyssa* wrote that the pure in heart “see God in a mirror, reflected in themselves.” This wasn’t sentiment—it was **transformation**.

◆ Purity of Heart and Ongoing Conversion

What’s often missed is how deeply this Beatitude is tied to **conversion**—an interior turning and returning to God that happens again and again. Conversion isn’t merely about turning *away* from sin; it’s about turning *toward* God with greater integrity. It requires the stripping away of false devotions, ego attachments, ideological rigidity, and even inherited spiritual frameworks that no longer lead us to love.

To be pure in heart is to be **willing to be changed**.

It’s to let God lead.

It's to allow one's spirituality to be **re-formed** around Christ, rather than using Christ to reinforce what one already believes.

This is especially important in Franciscan formation, where the goal is not simply to learn *about* Franciscan spirituality—but to let it **reorient one's entire spiritual life**.

◆ **Franciscan Insight: Simplicity, Sincerity, Surrender**

St. Francis models this Beatitude in his **joyful, uncluttered pursuit of God**. He let go of everything that clouded his vision—possessions, prestige, control—so he could live with a heart wholly turned toward Christ.

For Franciscans, **purity of heart isn't sterile**—it's alive with desire for God.

It involves:

- A **clear-eyed humility** about one's own flaws.
- A willingness to let go of spiritual vanity and self-importance.
- A deep inner freedom that makes space for the Holy Spirit to lead.

As St. Clare says:

“Place your mind before the mirror of eternity... that you may totally transform into the image of the Godhead itself.”

The simplest way to do this is to compare your thoughts and actions to those of Christ and work to make sure your thoughts and actions align with Christ's.