HOW TO BE CLOSE TO GOD

PSALM 24:3-6

5-8-2019

*** YOU MUST <u>QUALIFY</u> TO BE <u>CLOSE</u> TO GOD.**

<u>Who qualifies</u>? (Who meets God's requirements?)

I. The One Who is:
<u>CLEAN</u> IN HIS <u>ACTIONS</u> (Undefiled Hands)

II. The One Who is:
<u>PURE</u> IN HIS <u>ATTITUDE</u> (Unmixed Heart)

III. The One Who is:
<u>FAITHFUL</u> IN HIS <u>AFFECTION</u> (Undivided Love)

IV. The One Who is:
<u>TRUTHFUL</u> IN HIS <u>AGREEMENTS</u> (Unhypocritical words)

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INTRODUCTION: Upon the heels of Ps. 23:6 which expressed David's longing desire to be in God's house, is Ps. 24:1-6 which describes the qualifications of one who may enter and v. 7-10 which describes Yahweh's (Jesus') entrance into Mt. Zion.

Verses 1 & 2 describe the sovereignty of God. Therefore, He must not be approached lightly. He also is not limited to a single location. However, He said He would meet with His people at the "place He would appoint" - the Temple.

"The Hill of the Lord" = God's "holy hill of Zion."

"His Holy Place" = the Temple (Psalm 65:4 - "Blessed is the man whom thou choosest, and causest to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy courts: we shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, even of thy holy temple."

Deut. 12:5-7.

Background to Temple: It was the place where man met God. EX: Daniel while in Babylon prayed toward the Temple. The most holy site in Israel. The Temple was the place of sacrifice, the place of fellowship and prayers, the place of worship.

These moral requirements are similar to those in Psalm 15.

ILLUS: of necessity of qualifying for sports, job, school, a girlfriend with standards, etc.

Not everyone gets to sit down with the President of the USA or the Prime Minister of England.

Not everyone gets to enter God's presence. He is holy.

--Who is <u>worthy</u> of the privilege of drawing close to God?

--Who has the <u>character</u> that will earn the right to stand in the presence of the Lord of the universe?

--Who <u>qualifies</u> to be in close fellowship with God?

There are 2 Aspects to approaching God. We must have a right:
Relationship (We are accepted in the Beloved – Eph. 1:3-7)
Fellowship (We must be on talking terms with God)

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I. The One Who is:
<u>CLEAN</u> IN HIS <u>ACTIONS</u> (Undefiled hands)

"Clean hands" - clean = free from whatever stains or pollutes.
The priests would wash their hands in the laver (10 round water basins plus one large one) before they would minister in God's presence in the Temple.

See Ps. 26:6.

We cannot approach God with hands that are dirty or bloody with sin!

Paul using the imagery of the washing of hands in the laver said that Christ died for us that He "might sanctify and <u>cleanse</u> us with the <u>washing of the water</u> by the word" (Eph. 5:26).

READ Isaiah 1:11-18.

You can't expect to commit sexual immorality, drunkenness, theft, etc., and boldly come into the presence of God!

If our hands are not clean, let us wash them in Jesus' precious blood.

"But if we walk in the light as He is . . . blood . . . cleanses." (I Jn. 1:7)

"If we confess our sins . . . cleanse." (I Jn. 1:9).

II. The One Who is:
PURE IN HIS ATTITUDE (Unmixed Heart)

Clean hands (actions) are not enough unless they are connected with a pure heart (attitude)

"True religion is heart work" (Spurgeon).

We may wash the outside of the cup all we want, but the inside is what really matters.

"Pure" = to separate impurities; to make clean and bright by washing, rubbing or polishing.

David cried out: "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me" (Ps. 51:10).

Jesus said: "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." (Mt. 5:8)
"Blessed are the pure in heart. . ."Matthew 5:8

A house might have excellent curb appeal. It may look good on the outside; but what matters is the inside.

A car may have a beautiful body, but if under the hood you have a greasy-grimy, blown-broken motor, you don't have much.

A girl may be a "knock out" with unblemished external beauty, but if in her heart purity is absent, she is nothing more than an empty shell, vain veneer, hollow plastic.

This mighty statement of Jesus in verse 8 was a rebuke to the mere outward, superficial, hypocritical religion of the Scribes and Pharisees.

"Heart" = kardia (Eng. cardiac, etc.) - "the chief organ of physical life ("for the life of the flesh is in the blood - Lev. 17:11), occupies the most important place in the human system. By an easy transition, the word came to stand for man's entire mental and moral activity, both the rational and the emotional elements. In other words, the heart is used figuratively for the hidden springs of the personal life." (Vine, p. 206-207).

"The heart is the center of the inner life of the person where all the spiritual forces and functions have their origin" (TDNT)

Our heart (kardia) is that inner aspect of man that **thinks** (Lk. 9:47), **reasons** (Mk. 2:6, 8), **ponders** (Lk. 2:19), **imagines** (Lk. 1:51), **remembers** (Lk. 1:66), **purposes** (II Cor. 9:7), **wonders** (Lk. 3:15), **determines** (Lk. 21:14), **questions** (Lk. 24:38), **believes** (Lk. 24:25; Acts 8:37; Ro. 10:9, 10), and **motivates** (Mk. 7:21).

The heart encompasses man's intellect (Mt. 13:15; Prov. 23:7); emotion (Jn. 16:22), and will (Ro. 6:17, Col. 3:15). It enables him to think, feel, and do.

The heart is your "hidden man" (I Pet. 3:4); the real you that lies deep beneath that part of you that everyone sees.

The signs of "heart disease" are revealed by the Great Physician in Mark 7:21-22.

One's fruit is an indication of one's heart (Lk. 6:45 - *"A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil: for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh").*

--Religion is no substitute for being pure in heart.

--Knowing Bible facts is no substitute for being pure in heart.

Living in a "glass bubble" (in isolation from the "rif-raf" of society) is no substitute for a pure heart (Monasticism does not eradicate our problem).

What is a pure heart?

1. It is a sincere heart
   I Pet. 1:22 - *"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"*

   The word "pure" (katharos) was a Greek term "often used of metals that had been refined until all impurities were removed, leaving only the pure metal. In that sense, purity means unmixed, unalloyed, unadulterated" (MacArthur, p. 204)

2. It is a righteous heart
God's standard for purity of heart is perfection of heart (Mt. 5:48).
100% purity is God's standard (MacArthur, p. 205). Such a standard can only be met if God gives us a heart transplant!

Being pure in heart is the opposite of:

--Lustful thoughts (Mt. 5:28 - *"But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart")*

--Materialistic thoughts (Mt. 6:21 - *"For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also")*

"God knoweth your hearts" (Lk. 16:15)

God will expose what is really on the inside of men's hearts (I Cor. 4:5 - *"Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord comes, who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal the counsels of the hearts; and then each one's praise will come from God" NKJV)*

What lost sinners need is a spiritual heart transplant (Ezek. 36:25-26)

Rather than patching your exterior to hide the interior, why not ask God to create in you a clean heart? (Ps. 51:10).

We should spend more time on being what we ought to be, rather than hiding what we are."

Applic. for Christian - Just as one would remove dirt, filth, and contamination from a glass or drinking container before filling it and drinking out of it, so God must purify a heart before He can fill it or use it.

You can't fight with your mate, refuse to do your role in your marriage, and think God is pleased with you.

Wives who will not submit and husbands who are bitter toward their wives will not have their prayers answered (I Pet. 3:7).

III. The One Who is: FAITHFUL IN HIS AFFECTION (Undivided Love)

This phrase has the similar idea as Ezek. 18:15, which speaks of one "lifting up his eyes to the idols." God does not want us to acknowledge any other "gods."

Beware of "idols of the heart" (Ezekiel 14:3)

"Coveteousness is idolatry" (Col. 3:5).

In whatever you find "joy", that is what your soul is "lifted up" unto.

God expects undivided loyalty (just as a husband would from his wife).

You can't bow down to vain materialism, pride, or worldliness, and expect God to welcome you into His presence.

IV. The One Who is: TRUTHFUL IN HIS AGREEMENTS (Unhypocritical Words)

"Swears" = the Hebrew word comes from the word "seven" (7). Since seven was a sacred number, oaths were confirmed either by seven victims offered in sacrifice, or by seven witnesses.

"Deceitfully" = to cast down, or let fall. Your word does not stand.

No intention to do what you promise.

We give our word in:

1) Marriage (vows taken)
2) Church membership (ch. covenant agreed upon)

3) The business world (sign on the dotted line)
4) Friendships (shake hands on it)
5) Court ("I swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth so help me God.")
6) Prayer (promises to God)

Jephthah vowed a vow unto the Lord (Jud. 11:30) and did not go back on his word.

He said to his daughter: "I have opened my mouth unto the Lord, and I cannot go back" (v. 35).

"Let your yea be yea . . ."

". . . All liars shall have their part in the lake which burneth . . ." (Rev. 21:8)

EX: New Year's Resolutions

EX: Decisions made after a message.

EX: Dedications of your children to God

CONCLUSION: Jacob was an example of one who sought God's presence and blessing and wrestled for it (Gen. 32:24-32).

Who qualifies?
1.The one who is <u>clean</u> in his <u>actions</u> (undefiled hands)
2.The one who is <u>pure</u> in his <u>attitude</u> (unmixed heart)
3.The one who is <u>faithful</u> in his <u>affection</u> (undivided love)
4.The one who is <u>truthful</u> in his <u>agreements</u> (unhypocritical words)

WE MUST COME TO GOD ON HIS TERMS

"Be ye holy, for I am holy" (I Pet.1:16)

Don't think for a minute that sin is ever justified before the eyes of a holy God!
Don't come to God on your terms but on HIS! Don't make the mistake of thinking that God's ways & standards are like that of the world.
"*Thou thoughtest that I was altogether as thyself*" (Psalm 50:21)

Because God is HOLY:

1) You can't <u>be saved</u> on your own terms (God accepts nothing but the sacrifice of His dear Son (Heb.9:22; Acts 4:12)

2) You can't <u>pray</u> on your own terms
"If I regard iniquity...."
"The effectual fervent ....of a righteous man..."

3) You can't <u>worship</u> on your own terms (Lev.10:3; Ps.99:5)
Nadab & Abihu (Lev.9:23 - 10:3)

4) You can't <u>serve</u> on your own terms (Psalm 2:11)
Uzzah touched the Ark (II Sam.6:6,7)
Moses sstruck the Rock (Num.20:11-12)

5) You can't <u>please God</u> on your own terms (Heb.11:6)
Saul saved sacrifices for God (I Sam.15:17,22,23)

6) You can't <u>give yourself to God</u> on your own terms (See: Rom.12:1,2)

As a general guide as to whether or not a practice would match God's Standard, ask yourself the question: "Is it HOLY?"

It should be our daily prayer:
"Lord, set me apart from anything that is unclean in your sight *(I Thess.5:23)*
so that I may please you and serve you acceptably" *(II Tim.2:21)*

Only God dependence, not flesh dependence can accomplish this!