

PRINCIPLES OF JESUS CHRIST SERIES

THREE LEVELS OF PURITY

Matt. 5: 33 onwards, "Again you have learned that it was said to those of old, you shall not swear falsely, but shall perform your oaths to the Lord. But I say to you, do not swear at all, neither by heaven, for it is God's throne; nor by the earth, for it is His footstool; nor by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. Nor shall you swear by your head, because you cannot make one hair white or black. But let your Yes be Yes, and your No, No. For whatever is more than these is from the evil one."

Let your yes be yes and your no be no. It is established in His life. Notice that as He introduces this principle, He is talking about swearing oath and everything else. That people are looking for finality. When a person swear he/she is trying to rest his /her oath or his/her ability or his/her promises on something stronger than him/her. But Jesus said don't do that. You cannot do it by heaven nor by earth and not even by your own body because you cannot even make your body. It's God who make your body. The principle behind that He is bringing forth that is present in His life is simple but yet there are many applications of it. Letting our yes be yes and no be no. It also means say what you mean and mean what you say. No twist and turn. You may say everybody knows that. Then why is it that nobody is doing that? Because for some people yes means no and no means yes. It's just the opposite. As we grow in life we realize that transparency. The principle behind is the principle of transparency. I want you to know that Jesus was transparent. What you see of His public life is what His private life is. What you see Him saying in public is what He says in private. Jesus is transparent. What you see is for real.

Sometimes people don't believe that people can be as good as people think that they can be. They say is this for real? How many times you have encountered situation and said is this for real. I can't believe it. That is possible. We need to be transparent and being transparent is not as easy as we think it is because most of us dare not be transparent, lest we be hurt or lest we be misunderstood. But look at it this way. You are going to be misunderstood anyway, because misunderstanding depends not only on the person to be understood but also on the person who is trying to understand. And as long as people are at different levels of growth, there will always be a lack of understanding depending on the spiritual level of the growth. We have to learn to be what we are. To say what we mean. What we are in public and what we are in private must be exactly the same. We mean business with God. I know sometimes even men of God live one way and do another. Or they do one thing and they do something else privately. They are not what I call inconsistent.

This looks like a simple principle but basically it is the principle of transparency. It is a principle of consistency. Being what you are in public or in private without wearing any mask. Just follow after God and being obedient to do what God do and say what God say without any fear of men or demons. The only fear you have is the fear of God in your life. In the bible as in our time today, people don't always say what they mean and mean what they say. We learn through culture and through society and through diplomacy to beat around the bush. We are not transparent enough. Jesus likes transparency and Jesus looks right through at our life. There was a man who came to Jesus Christ and said, Lord, divide my brother's inheritance with me. Jesus did not even bother to say anything about the division or to help. Jesus looks right through his eyes and right through his heart and Jesus saw resting in his heart covetousness. The incident recorded is in Luke 16: 14 *"Now the Pharisees, who were lovers of money, also heard all these things, and they derided Him."*

Notice here, the Pharisees in his days told the people to do many things but in their heart they were covetous for money or for position. Jesus called them what they are. He called them hypocrites who made their robes long. Made their prayers long for display not really out of their heart. Long prayers are all right because when your heart is burdened you cry longer. But they made it for display. Jesus picks up the covetous in their hearts and began to speak parables against

them.

The other incident is in Lk 12: 13 *“Then one from the crowd said to Him, Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me.”*

Now it looks like a normal request. It looks like a normal day's work for a pastor. So here is a request. “Pastor, divide the inheritance for me. My brother is bullying me.” Most people will say, “I know a Christian lawyer.” But Jesus didn't just look at what we say, He look at why we say it. It's not what we say that is important, but it's why we say. If you learn this principle your social life with people will be more discreet and will be more fruitful because you can pick up falsehood from reality. It is not as important what people tell you but it's more important why they tell you. Why they say those things. Because what we say is colored by why we say. Ask any lawyer. If they are trying to win a case, they choose what to say and what not to say in case they give their opponent ground against them. The choice of what we say is determined and controlled by why we say.

Jesus looked right into this person and saw why he said it. It's because he was greedy for money. Now Jesus is not going to help a greedy man. He has to deal with that greediness. Jesus spoke a parable against that man. Some of us think that Jesus is so gentle, so kind He will never hurt a fly. Are you sure? This man came and asked for help and He began to say, “Take heed and beware of covetousness.” Straight away people would be hurt. Even if he is a greedy person and he comes to a pastor and say, “Pastor, can you help me?” Pastor looks at the covetousness in his heart and tells him, “Beware of covetousness.” “Oh, pastor you hurt me. You are a pastor how can you hurt me?” He is just telling you the truth. Speak the truth in love. And it's amazing that sometimes we are not willing to speak the truth in love. We are willing to love without truth or we are willing to speak the truth without love.

Think about Jesus. This fellow came and these Pharisees were all sitting down there. He looked around and he said, “You hypocrites.” This is the Lord Jesus

fairest of ten thousands, bright and morning star. If Jesus was in charge of a church or a ministry, He will correct where correction is needed. And as Jesus was talking about the Pharisees, one lawyer came and said, "Lord Master, by talking like that; you are also talking about us." And Jesus turned around and said, "Woe to the lawyers." When you see the word lawyer in the bible, it usually talks about the Scribes.

If anyone of us has enough fellowship with Jesus, let me tell you, Jesus is willing to tell you things that nobody else is willing to tell you. He is willing to correct you in areas where no one dares to correct you. He is like that. Jesus looks at not only what we say but also why we say it. The majority of people who are not trained in social skill and discernment are captivated by what He said. Leaders must always go by why people say and not what people say to effectively lead people. Why? People are not transparent. Only when God deals in their life, they become transparent. Another more blunt word for transparency is honesty. People are not outwardly honest to tell you the truth. Do you like this food? Yes! If I tell them I don't like the food, they throw the food on me. Just tell them I don't quite like this kind of food, but I appreciate the food and the thought. Just be honest, that's all. You know in your heart it's not easy to be honest. You are newly married. Your wife cooked the first dish for you, which turn out to be the bitter gourd. You wrestle between your love for your wife and your hatred for the bitter gourd. How to tell her in love? Say, dear, I appreciate this so much but I don't really like bitter gourd. Isn't it better to be honest? At first people don't appreciate the honesty but in long run they appreciate because it's easier to deal with you. How many of us here admit that it's easier to deal with an honest person who tells you things that you don't like to hear, than to deal with a dishonest person who says nice things that you like to hear. I don't know why God made all the good food bitter and all the bad food sweet. One day I found the answer. It's not that God made them that way. The devil made them that way. He turns our taste buds until what is bad for us tastes good. Nice tasty prawns, crabs, we develop a taste for them so that we end up eating really unhealthy high cholesterol toxic food and eat less of the really good and healthy food. Praise God that can change. Say, I am subject to change until eternity is birthed in my heart and my body. That can change.

When I was small I never like bitter gourd. Maybe there is a teaching in

there. One day, I was doing house visitation, and there was this dish there. It was bitter melon but I have never seen bitter melon like that. They sliced it very thin and fried it until it's a little bit crispy. I took one bite and from that day onwards I like bitter melon. So what's the principle behind that parable? The cook makes the difference. When some people don't like certain people, it is not what it is. It is presentation. If you love someone who resists the gospel, maybe it's not they themselves resisting the gospel. Maybe they are resisting the way the gospel is presented. There would be more people in church today, there would be more people saved if we were to learn to present the gospel. Because there are a lot of hungry people out there who really want the gospel, but because of the presentation, it doesn't taste good. They have a stereotyped image of what Christians are like. They don't know that we have fun in Christianity. That Christian life is enjoyable. A lot of businessmen think that when they come to God they will lose all their money. It's because of their stereotyped wrong mental thinking of what Christianity is.

The world would be a better place if we all were honest, transparent and forthright. Say what we mean and mean what we say. And dare to tell when we defer. We could disagree with being disagreeable. There are no two people who will agree 100% on everything. You may agree with some, 10%, some 50% but you will find that there are areas that you may do it differently. But we must learn to be gracious to disagree without being disagreeable so that we could live and let live. We realize that for example, Jesus had to deal with all the people around Him who were not honest all His life. One of His twelve apostles was not honest. Do you remember the incident when Jesus was being anointed? Then one of the disciples said why wasn't this money given to us? Why such a waste of money put this perfume on the Lord Jesus Christ.

Lets turn to the book of John. It's John that gives us the inside picture and tells us in the gospel of John 12: 4-5 *"But one of His disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, who would betray Him, said, why was this fragrant oil not sold for three hundred denarii's and given to the poor?"*

Was he concerned for the poor? John says in verse 6, *"This he said, not that he cared for the poor."* He does not care for the poor but because he handles the money

and if the money is in his charge he could fiddle with the money. Judas said what he did not mean because he meant something else in his heart. His yea was not yea. His nay was not nay. He did not care for the poor. He actually was concerned for himself. See that is an example of not being transparent. Yet you notice the skill of people like that is they turn the attention away to somebody else. They turn and make the woman the accused when he is the accused. Throw a red herring into the picture – a distraction. He did not say what he really meant in his heart. His heart and his mouth and his head are going different directions. To be transparent is a principle of the Lord Jesus Christ. What does the bible say in the other places?

Turn to the book of James 5, which includes a little warning here. When we are not transparent people, we will begin to take on the nature of the devil. Jesus warns us in Matthew 5; anything else that blocks transparence is of the evil one. Anything else is of the evil one.

James 5: 12 *"But above all, my brethren, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or with any other oath. But let your Yes be Yes, and your No, No, lest you fall into judgment."*

In Matthew 5 it warns us that anything else is evil. In James 5 it warns us that the judgment that is there for a lack of transparency. We need to be honest with one another. To be honest with God and we need to be right for right. Anything outside of it is classified as deception. That is why Jesus says it is like the devil. It is the beginning of deception. First we deceive ourselves. Then we begin to deceive others and there is a judgment involved. Our nature will be affected. The enemy will have an open hand here.

Paul and many others and Jesus Himself were effective in their lives because their hearts could come right out through their actions and through their words. Effective people are those who allow transparency to flow out of their lives. They can touch your life. They can transform your life because you know that what they are saying is from the heart. It is not a put on. It is not something artificial. It's real and it comes out and that reality hits you and blast away everything that blocks your life.

Paul was a very honest man. He lived right with God and he did right with God. When he was talking to the Corinthians he encouraged them. He said, look, we open our hearts wide to you; we are speaking to you the truth. In II Cor. it tells here in chapter 6: 11, now this is a man who wrote the major portion of the New Testament. Why did God use him so mightily? There was a clear channel for God to flow through. There was transparency. There was no slyness, craftiness, and deceptiveness. He is for real. He is what he is in public. He is what he is in private. Because his life was transparent, the glory of God, the power of God and the Word of God could flow through his life and touch the lives of the people around him and touch every other life today in our time. When he wrote those words, he wrote what he meant and he meant what he said. He could back it up with his life. And he could touch people.

He said to the Corinthians, *"O Corinthians! We have spoken openly to you, our heart is wide open."* Therefore the

anointing of God can flow. How shall I develop transparency? There are three little words that we want to consider. As I was studying in my private devotional life sometime back about purity of heart, sometimes we sing that song in our worship, *a pure heart that's what I long for*. A heart that's undivided but one you rule and reign. A pure heart that's what I long for. Because blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. Why don't people see God and know God? Because their heart is not pure, their heart is not transparent. There are things blocking them. And as I was studying purity, I was stunned by some facts. At first there were two words that I struggled with because there were two Greek words for pure. I couldn't see why there should be two. I know the four Greek words for power. Two Greek words for pure. In our English language pure is pure. But the words for purity are so different and unrelated. I thought they could be related but I examine more carefully I say no; there must be something to it. In Matthew 5: 8 "*Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.*" How many here desires to see God? Do you know it is possible? Having vision and seeing the things of God are very easy. It has to do with something on our inside.

The Greek word is the word '*katharos*'. Blessed are the pure in heart. '*Katharos*' mean cleansed, washed and purity. It carries the same meaning like our English word *pure*. It's undefiled. It is used as in a *pure* heart or a *clean* heart. It is the same Greek word that Jesus used in John 15: 3 "*You are already katharos because of the Word which I have spoken to you.*" You are already clean. You are already made pure by the Word,

which I have spoken to your life. Jesus spent three years cleaning them up by teaching them. What is teaching? Teaching is cleansing us from the wrong thing and wrong principles we adhere to. Remove them from our lives. Jesus said, "You are *katharos* because of the Word that I have spoken onto you."

But that's a strange thing. There is another word for purity.

I Cor.5: 8 "Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth."

He is asking us to be sincere. If you analyze the illustration He is talking about purity because leaven in the bread defiles it. If you think the principle we are teaching about yea, yea and nay, nay is not something important, I want to bring to your remembrance the incident in Mark 8. After two miracles of feeding the five thousands and then the four thousands when Jesus Christ was in the boat with His disciples, He turned around to them and gave them a warning. Now when Jesus gives warning, it means we got to hearken too. He told them in Mark 8, He says, beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and His disciples thought that He was talking about natural bread. No, Jesus was telling them to be sincere, to be pure, to be upright.

What is a sincere person? What they say and what they mean is one. They may not say in a right way but they mean what they say. The sincerity, the purity comes out. As oppose to insincerity. There is no malice in their heart. Now sometimes people claim sincerity but if you could examine it, there is no sincerity. Not everybody who says, "I am sincere," is sincere. You could tell it in the spirit because when a Christian has true sincerity he or she will spill it out. There is the

presence of God flowing out. There is anointing if true sincerity is there. The Pharisees are different. They do one thing and they say another thing. What they say and what they do don't synchronize. Isn't that what the Pharisees are? Jesus says, unless your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the Pharisees, you shall not inherit the kingdom of God. And He says what the Pharisees say to do it, although they say but they don't do. Now isn't that people whose yea, yea and nay, nay are not synchronized? Their yes and their no, their word and their heart were not synchronized. And Jesus says, we must synchronize our heart, our mind and our word.

II Cor. and we want to look at the different word here in chapter 11: 3 *"But I fear, lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your minds may be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ."*

Now Paul was talking about serious matter about simplicity. He is not talking about simplicity in a sense of being nice. He is talking about simplicity. The word simplicity is a different Greek word. You have learned three Greek words this morning. In verse 3, the word simplicity is the word '*Haplotes*'. Now '*haplotes*' has powerful meaning and it also means a type of transparency and purity. Let's look at this other word for simplicity or purity of heart. Here when he says simplicity it means from your heart. It says don't let your mind become crafty. Do you know deceiving and sly people are crafty? They know how to twist and turn their words to deceive. Paul says don't be like that because that is how the serpent is. That is how the devil is. Their yea, yea and nay, nay is not what it means. But be sincere and forthright and honest as it comes up from your life.

When I examine the word '*haplotes*', I was astounded at its various meaning. It means things that we never realize that it will mean. And it brings blessing that we never dream that it bring blessing. So most of us are interested in the blessings. Let me talk about some of those blessing that are involved when you begin to see how the word is used. And the word is found in places that you never thought you would find it. For example, in II Cor. 8: 2 *"That in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded in the riches of their liberality."*

Now where is the word '*haplotes*'? The word liberality is the same word '*haplotes*'. So the word '*haplotes*' means their liberality and the generosity of their spirit that

comes forth from their lives. What is inside is what is outside. There is no mask. It's pure undefiled religion, honesty, and integrity. Integrity is based on the very structure of our life. If you have integrity you don't have to swear by heaven. You don't have to swear by the earth. You don't have to swear by your own head. If you have integrity, what you say is what you meant. That's it. Your yes is yes, your no is no. It's people who lack integrity that struggle with the liberality of spirit; you are not one who hides or covers up. You are the one who say it from your heart all the time. Hearing the heart of people and speaking your heart. It just comes forth. You hide nothing from people.

That same word is used in chapter 9 of the same book in verse 11, *"While you are enriched in everything for all liberality."*

Now notice here, your transparency will determine your prosperity. You know why God does not bless people? He does not bless people who are crafty and shrewd but the meek shall inherit the earth. Not the crafty, not the shrewd but the meek who open their heart and they will inherit all those things. The shrewd try to obtain by force. See God will enrich that liberality in our heart.

This word is also used in Romans 12: 8: *"He who exhorts, in exhortation, he who gives, with liberality."*

Some translations put 'he who give with simplicity'. The word liberality talks about the heart. Being generous is not just something you do. Being generous is something in the heart. It has a big heart for people. And so liberality flows forth. It is the gift of God in our lives that can flow through us.

We look at Ephesians 6: 5. I like to give some examples and that will suffice. Verse 5, *"Bondservants, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in sincerity of heart, as to Christ."*

Now he is speaking here the sincerity of heart. Servants may serve their masters with deceptive hearts. They may hide things. But it's important to be sincere and forthright. Yea be yea and nay be nay. Some translations put there with singleness of heart. So we see three little root meanings of the word '*haplotes*'. First is singleness of heart. Second is generosity of heart and the third is simplicity. Purity that is uncorrupted. And then transparency comes out from soul and body.

And as I compare these words, I asked, "Lord, what are these words for purity '*katharos*', '*haplotes*'?" What are all these words coming together? Then I found in the book of II Peter 3: 1 "*Beloved, I now write to you this second epistle (in both of which I stir up your pure minds by way of reminder).*" You would have thought the word *pure* was '*katharos*' but its not. It's the other third Greek word that we are learning today. It is the word '*eilikrines*'. Now the word '*eilikrines*' has a totally different word and it also mean pure, transparent. But it's a combination of two words. It's the combination of the word '*eili*' and '*krines*'. The word '*krines*' has its roots in the word *judge*. The word '*eili*' has its roots in the word *shine*. The early meaning of the word '*eilikrines*' means the purity when something is brought to a shining light and the bright light exposes it. It's pure. It's a different degree of purity. If you see an airplane, you would have noticed some parts of the airplane are painted white. The white parts of the plane looks so white on the runway but when the plane takes off to the sky that same whiteness compared to the white clouds and the dazzling sunlight, the white of the plane looks gray. That means it doesn't have '*eilikrines*'. When its in the light its no more pure. It doesn't look white anymore. The word '*eilikrines*' means when its in the light its still pure.

I wrestled with these three words and I said, God, these many scriptures on purity and they are all these together. God began to show that there is the purity of the heart, which is *katharos*, there is a purity of the mind which is *eilikrines*. And there is a purity of you action, which is *haplotes*. There are three areas of purity, a purity of the heart, purity of the mind and a purity of the action. Now when we look at that, people who says, "My heart is sincere," do you know that in the bible purity of heart alone is not enough? If you really desire the things of God, then you notice that when Paul mentioned about the Macedonians' gifts and liberality like II Cor.8 and II Cor.9, and when the abundant blessings of God come, they have reach a purity of actions, spirit, soul and body.

Lets look at the book of Job. When he started, he only had purity of heart and purity of some of his actions. But there were still areas that he was not renewed yet. Look at Job chapter one and the commendation that God gives of Job. Many people don't even reach that state.

Job 1: 1 *"There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job; and that man was blameless and upright, and one who feared God and shunned evil."*

Now he had a certain measure of purity, but I want to show you that the man in Job chapter one and the man in Job chapter forty were different. It was the same man but now touched and changed. Job started with purity of heart but there is an area of purity that he has not come to. His yea was not always yea, and his nay was not always nay. Sometimes he doesn't mean what he says. He cursed his body, but it's not really in his heart. He cursed the day he was born, but in his heart, he didn't really mean to do that. And then when the light came, God's *eilikrines* or light of judgment began to deal with him and shone on his imperfections. Job said, "I cover my mouth for I have spoken things that I don't know of." His yea and his nay were not perfected.

When God appeared, in Job 38, these are Job's reply in chapter 40: 3-5. He was pure in chapter one. These were three different levels of purity.

In verse 3 & 4, *"Job answered the Lord and said, Behold, I am vile."* Was he pure? Was he sincere? There are three different levels of sincerity. Sincerity of heart. Sincerity of mind. Sincerity of action. *"Behold, I am vile; what shall I answer you? I lay my hand over my mouth."* He knew he was wrong. He knew he had said things that he should not have said.

Chapter 42, the Lord challenged him to reply. In verse 2 & 3 Job said, *"I know that You can do everything, and that no purpose of Yours can be withheld from You. You*

asked, who is this who hides counsel without knowledge? Therefore I have uttered what I did not understand." His yea and his nay was not exactly in his heart. It's almost like Elijah, he says, God I want to die. It takes testing until our yes is yes and our no is no. This is not something that you are going to reach instantly because *eilikrines* takes time. Now God was dealing in his *eilikrines* his word.

If there is one key to long life, what's the key? Proverbs 18: 21 says *"Death and life are in the power of the tongue."* Psalm 34: 12-13 *Who is the man who desires life and loves many good days, that he may see good? Keep your tongue from evil, and your tongue from evil, and your lips from speaking deceit.*

Now what does it mean by honoring the parents? You can outwardly obey everything but if your heart and in your lips you rebel, is that honoring? They asked you to do work, you do work but you grumbled and complained. He is not talking about obeying. He is talking about honoring. Honor comes from a person's heart and a person's lips. You honor a person by giving recognition. So it all comes down to one key. The tongue. God has to cleanse our tongue. There must be purity of heart. There must be purity of mind, which includes the renewal of the mouth.

When God's light shone upon Isaiah, (Isaiah 6) a prophet of God said, "O Lord, I am a man of unclean lips and I live among people of unclean lips," and God said, "I will take that coal." God took that coal and touched his lips and cleansed his lips. Perhaps your lips need cleansing today. Perhaps our lips not only our hearts but also our lips need to be cleansed. What do you do when in a crisis or when pressure is hot? What's the first thing that happens? The lips go wrong. People grumble, people complain, people say the wrong thing. They are like Job. They haven't reached chapter 40 of their life. We say we are sincere, but do you know we can instantly be sincere right now in our heart by just setting our heart right and removing all grudges and having the love of God? But sincerity in our mouth and our mind and sincerity in our action is a different realm. When we look at that, I will say the vast majority of the Christians world are living with unclean lips but proclaiming with a clean heart.

The word *eilikrines* is powerful because it means a purity that shines under a shining light. So that when the glory of God comes, you are the one who gets anointed. The light shines brightest to you. I want to challenge you this day, that one of the cardinal and key principles of Jesus' life are transparency of heart, of mind, of lips and of action. You don't deceive through your lips, you don't deceive through your actions and you don't deceive through your heart when we are people who are transparent in God's sight and before man. Then the power of God can be released through our lives. It will change those around us. It will bring deliverance to them. It will release the grace of God because it's powerful. That's the reason why sometimes it hurts some people because it's so powerful. Truth plus love cuts. The Word of God is like a sharp two-edged sword. But sometimes people need an operation. One day we will all stand at the judgment seat of Christ before God and you will be thankful to people who come to your life where iron sharpens iron and purify your life. Not people who come and say nice things only.

Paul in the book of Corinthians talks about purifying ourselves from the things that defile the spirit and the flesh. II Cor. 7: 1 *"Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God."* What is the filthiness of the flesh and the spirit? It has to do with the second level of impurity that people have. They have the purity of the heart but they don't have the purity of their mind and their lips. They only have *katharos*. They don't have *eilikrines*, much less *haplotes*. And God wants a perfect cleansed mind, heart and soul, so that when that happens, you could walk in what Jesus says, your yea is yea, your nay is nay. When you say yes, you don't take it back. When you say no, that settles it. You are a person from the heart. Your heart comes right out without any blockages.

Are we brave enough to be honest or are we cowards. Are we men and women brave enough in Christ to be ready to look into someone in the face and say I want to be honest with you or are we cowards to hide behind diplomacy? My friends, it's not time to play games or play church. It's important that we say what we mean and mean what we say. Let our yea be yea and our nay be nay so that God could bring His power through your life to others, so that your life could be a transparent jewel in the sight of God. Don't live in Job chapter one but move forward to Job chapter 40. Move forward till to Jesus time where Jesus was what

He is inside and outside. A man after God's heart. A man of pure spirit, soul and body. Will you be that man or woman who will say, God, purify my heart, purify my lips, purify my mind and purify my action.