

## Purer In Heart - Verse 2

We discussed the first verse of song number 580 in our songbook, "Purer In Heart, O God." We noted the song begins with thoughts from (Matthew 5:8), *"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."* The opening lyrics request God's help to achieve that pure heart. The second verse opens with a plea for God's teaching; similarly, Solomon asked for wisdom to rule God's people. Solomon asked, *"Give me now wisdom and knowledge, that I may go out and come in before this people, for who can rule this great people of Yours?"* (2 Chronicles 1:10). The song's words ask, **"Teach me to do Thy will, most lovingly,"** so that we might teach others. In Solomon's case, Moses provided the knowledge for the King of Israel in the Law, but God granted him wisdom. In our case, the Bible contains knowledge; we gain wisdom through learning and applying the knowledge we gain.

When we turn to Scripture, we find that while Jesus was on Earth with His disciples, He responded to the request to teach them. *"One of His disciples said to Him, 'Lord, teach us to pray just as John also taught his disciples'"* (Luke 11:1). And Jesus proceeded to do just that. However, more often, Jesus said for people to apply themselves to the process of learning. Note the following verses. (Matthew 9:13), *"go and learn;"* (Matthew 11:29), *"learn from Me;"* (Matthew 24:32), *"Now learn the parable;"* (1 Corinthians 4:6), *"you may learn;"* (1 Corinthians 14:31), *"all may learn and all may be exhorted."* A teacher may present knowledge, but the student must put forth the effort to learn.

Luke says the first converts to Christ *"were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer"* (Acts 2:42). By devoting themselves, they were "steadfastly attentive to," giving all attention to learning all they could from the apostles. The encouragement Jesus gave His disciples to continue steadfast in prayer applies equally to learning. *"For everyone who asks, receives; and he who seeks, finds; and to him who knocks, it will be opened"* (Luke 11:10). Asking for knowledge should cause one to open their Bible daily and read, study, and meditate upon the knowledge it contains. We read in Acts an example of people with the proper attitude toward learning. *"They received the word with great eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so"* (Acts 17:11). We need to study daily, then compare the Old Testament with the New Testament to understand the unchanging truths from God.

We also notice that we are to be disciples (dedicated learners) of Christ's Gospel so that we can become teachers ourselves (Matthew 28:19); (2 Timothy 2:2). The process of working together in learning is expressed by Paul this way, *"Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God"* (Colossians 3:16). Sharing what each person learns helps everyone to gain knowledge. Putting truths to song helps everyone remember. We also have Paul's advice to Timothy, *"Give attention to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation and teaching"* (1 Timothy 4:13). There is a need to read Scripture in public and at home, along with teaching, to spread the call of Jesus to the world (Acts 1:8 NKJV).

In writing to the church in (Romans 17:11-15), Paul asks several questions to make the point that the Gospel is to be taught to others. He begins with a quote from (Isaiah 28:16) which Peter also uses in (1 Peter 2:6). *"Whoever believes in him will not be disappointed."* Paul points out that the Gospel is for everyone by saying, *"For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, abounding in riches for all who call on Him."* His conclusion is, *"Whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved."*

The questions are straightforward;

*"How then will they call on Him in whom they have not believed?"*

*"How will they believe in Him whom they have not heard?"*

*"And how will they hear without a preacher?"*

*"How will they preach unless they are sent?"*

*"Just as it is written." Paul concludes by citing (Isaiah 52:7), "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news of good things!"*

The qualifications of an elder recognize that he must be able to teach. *"A bishop then must be ... apt to teach"* (1 Timothy 3:2 KJV). The word translated able or apt in various translations gives a dual thought. He must be able to teach, and if given an opportunity, he will teach. The information learned and taught is Scripture. It is the Word of God, presented by Christ and The Holy Spirit, and is to be used *"for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work"* (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

Are you a disciple learning what Christ is teaching?