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## How can I be happy without doing anything dirty?

*"Blessed are the pure in heart."  
Matthew 5:8*



Wash your hands. Wash your hands! So often we are reminded of the need to wash our hands. After using the restroom, before eating, after eating, before cooking, after cooking. It's so hard to keep them clean.

And that's just our hands! Try keeping our hearts clean, and we have an impossible task! How hard it is to have perfectly pure motives! When I cut that little section of grass between my neighbors' house and mine, the good deed is spoiled with the self-serving intent that maybe he'll let me borrow his edger. I give some money for a worthy charitable cause, but only because I don't want to disappoint the sincere person asking.

We may be able to hide our impure motives from others, but not from God. The Bible says,

*"The LORD does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart"* (1 Samuel 16:7). We can't fool God. There is no covering false notions or hidden deception. God looks right through the outward act and inspects the inner motivation. He is looking for the pure in heart.

What is the measure for that kind of inner purity? God holds us up to his perfect will and measures us against it. The conclusion is that all of us have sinned and fall short of the sinless standard that God has set for us. Under God's inspection, our hearts are not pure.

What's the solution? Our hearts need to be washed. But how? We can't wash them on our own, so Jesus did it for us. The Bible says, *"The blood of Jesus, [God's] Son, purifies us from all sin"* (1 John 1:7). By his death for us, Jesus washed our hearts clean; he has cleansed us of sin's stain. Through him all our sins are forgiven and our hearts are now pure in God's sight.

The forgiveness of sins and purity of heart that we have received freely from Jesus powerfully motivates us to stay away from anything dirty. We'll not want to dirty our hearts again with sinful things. Rather, we'll be happy to strive to live according to the pure way that God teaches and thereby indicate our great appreciation for the sacrifice that Jesus made to wash our hearts clean.