



Life's Healing choices The Housecleaning Choice Matthew 5:8

"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God." Matthew 5:5 (NIV)

1. Share how things are going in your life. In particular, share what your experience has been during the series with trying to address a hurt, hang-up, or unhealthy habit in your life.
2. One definition of "purity of heart" is "living free from the tyranny of a divided self." Was there a time in your life where you lived a double life...you wore a mask to keep people from discovering the truth about yourself? How did you feel? Did your approach to your problems help you overcome them worse? Why do we wear masks knowing that God has already exposed us for who we are: Sinners in the need of grace!
3. When experiencing repeat sins or sins we consider hide because we are embarrassed by them, what are our default responses? What do we do to overcome them? Has it worked?
4. Have you ever taken a moral inventory before? Have you ever gone to a close friend and confided in them the struggles you were having with a particular sin, habit, hang-up or hurt? What was it like?
5. Why don't we "get everything off our chest?" What's the cost of hiding our sins and struggles?
6. Are you confident that God will clean up your life? What part are we to play in our "sanctification," the biblical word for a clean life?
7. Does confessing to God alone work or have you found it helpful to confide in one person? Why is it helpful...that is if you found it helpful?
8. Which of the six steps to overcoming guilt is the hardest for you?
9. Do you struggle with forgiving yourself? Why?

PERSONAL APPLICATION

It's not easy to come clean. We carry around the guilt of our hurts and hang-ups everywhere we go. At times, we may feel like life is loading us up with guilt. However, Christ wants to free us up from the guilt. To allow Jesus to free you from your guilt, you must make 'The Housecleaning Choice'.

To examine and confess your sins to yourself, take a moral inventory. Uncover the things you have kept covered for so long. Write them down. Be honest with yourself. Show the good choices and the bad ones. After you have completed your inventory list, accept responsibility for your faults. Don't rationalize – be real. Don't blame others – look to yourself. Don't deceive yourself – see it for what it is. Remember, God wants you to reveal the truth in your heart.

Once you've completed your moral inventory, take some time to think of two or three people you trust. Write their names down. Commit to praying for the courage and strength to speak with one of them this week. Ask for God's guidance in helping you choose the person you will call. Remember that when you risk honesty with

another person, you allow God to work and set you free. So you actually take this step, write down a deadline. The longer you wait the less your resolve will be to do it.

End the night using this prayer or pray your own prayer:

Dear God, you know our pasts – all the good and bad choices we have made and all the good and bad things each of us have done. Please give us the strength and courage to come clean and face the truth. Please open our eyes to the truths of our pasts – the truths of how others have hurt us and how each of us have hurt others. As we come clean, we ask for your forgiveness and thank you for your love and grace. In Christ's name we pray. Amen.