

“Clean Hearts – Dirty Hands”

Pastor David Hutsko

INTRODUCTION

This weekend’s sermon was a reminder to us that “doing church” means sometimes you get your hands dirty. Until we come to the place where our faith is more than just taking it in, where we are actually giving by pouring ourselves into other people and looking for ways to live out what we believe, we won’t enjoy the fullness of spiritual life that God intended. We weren’t just saved “from” something; we were saved “for” something. Let’s find out what it means to follow Jesus with clean hearts and dirty hands.

Ice Breaker (Optional—8 min): What did you do this week that got your hands dirty?

STUDY QUESTIONS (45 MIN)

Clean Hearts

Q1. Read Psalm 51:10-12

King David was a man after God’s own heart, He recognized the condition of his own heart, and knew how to deal with it. What was it he asked of God in Psalm 51? The Hebrew word for “create” is *bara'*, the same word used in Genesis 1:1. It means to make something out of nothing. What is the significance of asking God to create a new heart in us rather than clean up the old heart we have?

Q2. Read Matthew 5:8; Hebrews 10:19-22; 1 John 1:6-7

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus said, “Blessed are the pure in heart.” Purity was a critical concept in Jewish culture. There were many things that made someone “unclean.” But Jesus looked beyond the physical, or even the levitical sense of purity and focused instead on the heart. What is the source of a clean heart in us (Hebrews 10:19-22; 1 John 1:6-7)? Rather than “sweeping the dirt under the rug” or trying to clean it ourselves, what is your remedy when you sense your heart needs cleaning?

Dirty Hands

Q3 Read (scan) Matthew chapters 8 & 9

In the two chapters following the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus got his hands dirty by ministering to the needs of those with physical uncleanness (leprosy (8:1-4), paralysis, hemorrhaging, blind, mute, death (9:23-26)) and spiritual uncleanness (gentile, demonic possession (8:28-34), forgiveness of sins (9:2)). What are some of the things Jesus did to get his hands dirty in these situations? Which of these situations would

have been most difficult for you to engage? The “unclean” were outcasts in their society. What groups of people do you see as outcasts in our community? What are some opportunities we have to advance the kingdom, and get our hands dirty, among those “outcasts” in community?

Q4. Read Matthew 9:35-38; 1 Timothy 1:5

Matthew 9:35 tells us Jesus went to the people with good news of the kingdom of God and brought healing of both disease and affliction. What did he feel for the people (v. 36) and what did he do in response (v. 37)? According to 1 Tim 1:15, love flows from a pure heart, good conscience and sincere faith. Pray with your group that God increases those qualities in you so that you would also have compassion for the people and join Him in the harvest. What way do you think God might use you in His harvest?

WRAP-UP

On this earth, we are the hands and feet of Jesus through the power of the Holy Spirit. As we live out Jesus’ example to touch those in need with love born of a pure heart, we not only advance the kingdom of God, we ourselves are transformed into the image of the savior we follow. But first God has to put a new heart in us, a heart like His, so that we feel compassion for the lost as he does. When we see people like Jesus sees them, we will be eager to get our hands dirty bringing the good news of the kingdom, and healing to the lost and broken.

Memory Verse

Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest." Matthew 9:37-38 ESV

PRAYER (20 MIN)

Ask your group to pray for you regarding one area where you can apply this study in your life: _____

Pray for your group members’ needs: (see back for more space) _____

Challenge:

Ask God to give you a clean and compassionate heart so that you can see people the way he does and the watch for opportunities to get your hands dirty advancing the kingdom this week.

