

It is impossible, even with modern technology, to create anything that is perfectly pure in the physical world. Experiments in the Space Shuttle or Space Station will get about as close as possible. High purity is extremely important with regard to our enjoyment of electronic technology. Even very small impurities will foul the chip development that is essential to keep our TVs, VCRs, cell phones, and computers operating like we want. Pure motives are hard to develop and to keep. Christ is the only one that I know of that had entirely pure motives throughout his earthly life. But He was the son of God.

The impurities that had become commonplace in the nation of Israel are described in Isaiah 1:22-26,

*Your silver has become dross, your choice wine is diluted with water. Your rulers are rebels, companions of thieves; they all love bribes and chase after gifts. They do not defend the cause of the fatherless; the widow's case does not come before them. Therefore the Lord, the LORD Almighty, the Mighty One of Israel, declares: "Ah, I will get relief from my foes and avenge myself on my enemies. I will turn my hand against you; I will thoroughly purge away your dross and remove all your impurities.*

Similarly in Ezekiel 22:18-22, we read,

*Son of man, the house of Israel has become dross to me; all of them are the copper, tin, iron and lead left inside a furnace. They are but the dross of silver. Therefore this is what the Sovereign LORD says: 'Because you have all become dross, I will gather you into Jerusalem. As men gather silver, copper, iron, lead and tin into a furnace to melt it with a fiery blast, so will I gather you in my anger and my wrath and put you inside the city and melt you. I will gather you and I will blow on you with my fiery wrath, and you will be melted inside her. As silver is melted in a furnace, so you will be melted inside her, and you will know that I the LORD have poured out my wrath upon you.'*

You can sense God's frustration at cleansing his "people."

Whatever we do results from a mixture of motives. No one does anything from a perfectly pure or single motive. Even if we do good, we get some pleasure out of the attention that we get, or we consider it a treasure laid up in heaven for us. We cannot totally get away from that. What we must do is do the best we can to keep ourselves "unpolluted by the world," as we read in James 1:27. I can relate to the dream of Nebuchadnezzar's that Daniel interpreted where the giant statue had feet and toes of iron mixed with clay. This was in no way an alloy designed to produce strength. The iron was strong, but the clay caused the entire structure to be weak. The selfish desires that we have are like the clay. We can't be perfect enough to keep all impurities out, but we have to try. Too many times we ignore the problem. In Proverbs 16:2, we read that every man is clean in his own sight, but the Lord can analyze the impurities in his motives.

There is hope, for God has the power to cleanse us. When Isaiah was asked by God to be His prophet, he said, "I am a man of unclean lips!" But God sent one of his angels to him with a live coal in his hand, and he touched his mouth and proclaimed him clean. Isaiah accepted this cleansing and responded by saying, "Here am I. Send me!" We may feel unworthy to serve God, but He cleanses us and we can go forth to do His work.

*Have mercy on me, O God, according to your unfailing love; according to your great compassion blot out my transgressions. Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin... Cleanse me with hyssop, and I will be clean; wash me, and I will be whiter than snow... Hide your face from my sins and blot out all my iniquity. Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me...*

*Psalms 51*

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