

Gathering

PURITY

Captain Selah Bender, Oneonta Corps

I'm not sure what first comes to your mind when you hear the word purity. But for me it was a quote from Woody the Cowboy from the *Toy Story* films. I've watched it countless times with my son and I thought of the little boy pulling the rope on Woody's back and hearing "Somebody's poisoned the water hole". And as I thought of that I laughed at how ridiculous I am for thinking of that first thing. But you know, there is something about coming to drink from a fresh stream and finding that the water has been polluted. It's not just that it no longer tastes good, or that you need to boil it to make it safe. It's an attack on a complete livelihood. Water is required for people to live and if it's poisoned, what is a person to do?

Our hearts are just like water. They can be pure and life-giving, strengthening us and strengthening others. Or they can be impure and poisoned, draining the lives out of not only us, but everything we put our hands to. Our relationships. Our tasks. Our purposes. We need a pure source. Psalm 119 begins with sharing that the way to be blameless is to obey God's law, to trust in His ways, to learn His word and hide it in our hearts. Verse 9 states:

*How can a young person stay on the path of purity?
By living according to your word. Psalm 119:9*

The way to purity is to draw near to God. His word enters our heart and starts transforming it. God uses it to start purifying the source of our lives and everything that flows out of it becomes pure as a result.

After reading scripture consider these questions:

- What first comes to your mind when you hear the word purity?
- What are some things that you have seen affected by an impure heart?
- How do you think God's word works to purify our hearts?
- What are ways to make reading scripture a regular habit? And what are some tips for memorizing scripture?

Complete your monthly report and turn it in to the Corps Officer.

Psalm 119:9

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How can a young person
stay on the path of **purity?**

By living according to your **Word**

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Living a pure life seems impossible. But this Psalm makes it sound simple. If we stay rooted in scripture than what comes out in our lives will flow from a pure source. Check out the following passages to explore the topic of purity further.



READ PSALM 119:1-16

What does the repeated wording in Psalm 119 tell you about the importance of knowing God's law. Can you count how many times it refers to God's word and the different words that are used to describe it. What aspect does each word that is used portray?

READ EXODUS 15:22-27

Imagine how thirsty you would be after three days without water. Imagine how you would feel when you finally find water, but it is bitter and no good for drinking. What does this passage tell us about God's power to transform bitter water to fresh, pure water? Can this same power be present in our own hearts?

READ HOSEA 4:1-3

This passage talks about the effects of forgetting God's ways. Not only do people mistreat and abuse one another, but the entire land suffers. Our purity is not just for our benefit. In prayer ask God to reveal to you ways in which your relationship with Him has affected other parts of your life. Praise Him for the good. And ask for mercy for the bad. And then ask that God would help you to remain steadfast in your following of His word.



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