



THE **BLESSED** BATTLE

“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled. Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God. Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”

THE BEATITUDES OF JESUS



THE **BLESSED** BATTLE
ARE THE PURE IN HEART
FOR THEY WILL SEE GOD





TRUE LOVE WAITS

Because I believe that *true love waits*, I make a commitment to God, myself, my family, the people I date, my future spouse, and my future children to be sexually pure and abstain from sex until I get married.

Ben Deaver

Signed

9 14 1994

Date

Kansas City Youth for Christ

Five years after the pledge, 82% of pledgers denied having ever pledged. Pledgers and matched nonpledgers did not differ in premarital sex, sexually transmitted diseases, and anal and oral sex variables.

The sexual behavior of virginity pledgers does not differ from that of closely matched nonpledgers, and pledgers are less likely to protect themselves from pregnancy and disease before marriage. Virginity pledges may not affect sexual behavior but may decrease the likelihood of taking precautions during sex. Clinicians should provide birth control information to all adolescents, especially virginity pledgers.

AMERICAN ACADEMY OF PEDIATRICS 2009 STUDY

The findings of nearly 300 pages include shocking new details about specific abuse cases and shine a light on how denominational leaders for decades actively resisted calls for abuse prevention and reform. Evidence in the report suggests leaders also lied to Southern Baptists over whether they could maintain a database of offenders to prevent more abuse when top leaders were secretly keeping a private list for years.

THE WASHINGTON POST MAY 2022 ARTICLE

The investigation finds that for almost two decades, survivors of abuse and other concerned Southern Baptists have been contacting the Southern Baptist Convention's administrative arm to report alleged child molesters and other accused abusers who were in the pulpit or employed as church staff members. Many of the cases referred to in the report were considered outside the statute of limitations, the time survivors can report sex abuse, so it's unclear how many abusers were criminally charged.

THE WASHINGTON POST MAY 2022 ARTICLE

“I knew it was rotten, but it’s astonishing and infuriating,” said Jennifer Lyell, a survivor who was once the highest-paid female executive at the SBC and whose story of sexual abuse at a Southern Baptist seminary is detailed in the report. “This is a denomination that is through and through about power. It is misappropriated power. It does not in any way reflect the Jesus I see in the scriptures. I am so gutted.”

THE WASHINGTON POST MAY 2022 ARTICLE

¹⁷ “Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. ¹⁸ For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished. ¹⁹ Therefore anyone who sets aside one of the least of these commands and teaches others accordingly will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. ²⁰ For I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven.

²⁵ “Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You clean the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of greed and self-indulgence. ²⁶ Blind Pharisee! First clean the inside of the cup and dish, and then the outside also will be clean. (Like when I clean my water bottle.) ²⁷ “Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You are like whitewashed tombs, which look beautiful on the outside but on the inside are full of the bones of the dead and everything unclean. ²⁸ In the same way, on the outside you appear to people as righteous but on the inside you are full of hypocrisy and wickedness.

**Come near to God and he will come near to you.
Wash your hands, you sinners,
and purify your hearts, you double-minded.**

JAMES CHAPTER 4 VERSE 8



THE BLESSED BATTLE

BE CLEAN!

1. Come to Jesus to become clean.

RESPONSE AND ACTION

¹ When Jesus came down from the mountainside, large crowds followed him. ² A man with leprosy came and knelt before him and said, “Lord, if you are willing, you can make me clean.” ³ Jesus reached out his hand and touched the man. “I am willing,” he said. “Be clean!” Immediately he was cleansed of his leprosy.

**³ Cleanse me with hyssop, and I will be clean;
wash me, and I will be whiter than snow.
¹⁰ Create in me a pure heart, O God,
and renew a steadfast spirit within me.**

¹ “I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener.

**² He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit,
while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes
so that it will be even more fruitful.**

³ You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. ⁴

Remain in me, as I also remain in you.

No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine.

Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me.

**⁸ “God, who knows the heart, showed that he accepted them by giving the Holy Spirit to them, just as he did to us.
⁹ He did not discriminate between us and them, for he purified their hearts by faith.”**

¹¹ For the grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people. ¹² It teaches us to say “No” to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, ¹³ while we wait for the blessed hope—the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, ¹⁴ who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good.

²⁵ Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her ²⁶ to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, ²⁷ and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless.

- 1. Come to Jesus to become clean.**
- 2. Come to one another for foot washing.**

RESPONSE AND ACTION

^{10a} Jesus answered, “Those who have had a bath need only to wash their feet; their whole body is clean. And you are clean...” ¹² When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. “Do you understand what I have done for you?” he asked them. ¹³ “You call me ‘Teacher’ and ‘Lord,’ and rightly so, for that is what I am. ¹⁴ Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another’s feet. ¹⁵ I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you.”

**Therefore confess your sins to each other
and pray for each other so that you may be healed.
The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.**

JAMES CHAPTER 5 VERSE 16

- 1. Come to Jesus to become clean.**
- 2. Come to one another for foot washing.**
- 3. Come into the Presence of God.**

RESPONSE AND ACTION

¹⁹ Therefore, brothers and sisters, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, ²⁰ by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body, ²¹ and since we have a great priest over the house of God, ²² let us draw near to God with a sincere heart and with the full assurance that faith brings, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water.

²³ Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. ²⁴ And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, ²⁵ not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.



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PURE IN HEART