

## Lent 2023 - Week 1

### Blessed – the Kingdom of Heaven

Let us Pray

please join in with words in bold

May the Lord Almighty be with us as we meet together, as we turn our hearts to Him, and turn away from our sinful ways, as we pray, and as we lift our eyes and our lives to see His glory.

**Amen**

**Most merciful God, we confess to you,  
before the whole company of heaven and one another,  
that we have sinned in thought, word and deed  
and in what we have failed to do.**

**Forgive us our sins, heal us by your Spirit  
and raise us to new life in Christ.**

**Amen.**

Bless the Lord, O my soul.

O Lord my God, how excellent is your greatness!

You are clothed with majesty and honour, wrapped in light as in a garment.

O Lord, how manifold are your works!

May the glory of the Lord endure for ever;

I will sing to the Lord as long as I live;

I will make music to my God while I have my being.

*From Psalm 104*

That this evening may be holy, good and peaceful,  
let us pray with one heart and mind.

*Silence is kept.*

As our evening prayer rises before you, O God,

**so may your mercy come down upon us**

**to cleanse our hearts and set us free to sing your praise  
now and for ever.**

**Amen**

## Song

## To be in your presence

Noel Richards

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*To be in your presence,  
To sit at Your feet,  
Where Your love surrounds me,  
And makes me complete.*

*This is my desire, O Lord, This is my desire.  
This is my desire, O Lord, This is my desire.*

*To rest in Your presence,  
Not rushing away;  
To cherish each moment,  
Here I would stay.*

## The Beatitudes

Jesus said:

*“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.***

## Opening Thoughts

What are your expectations and hopes for this Lent Course?

Why do a Lent course at all?

## Reflection - Blessed

### Our Lent Conversation – Part 1

Counting our blessings: share some ways God has blessed you.

Does it matter whether you *feel* blessed?

How do you know if you are blessed?

How do you become blessed?

## Reflection – The Kingdom of Heaven

### Our Lent Conversation – part 2

What's the point of the Kingdom of Heaven?

How does the Kingdom of Heaven fit with the things of our world in our time?

How do you enter the Kingdom of Heaven?

Who would you include in/exclude from the Kingdom of Heaven?

## Psalm 1

- 1 Blessed is the one who does not  
walk in step with the wicked  
stand in the way that sinners take  
or sit in the company of mockers**
- 2 but whose delight is in the law of the LORD,  
and who meditates on his law day and night.**
- 3 That person is like a tree planted by streams of water,  
which yields its fruit in season  
and whose leaf does not wither—whatever they do prospers.**
- 4 Not so the wicked!  
They are like chaff that the wind blows away.**
- 5 Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment,  
nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous.**
- 6 For the LORD watches over the way of the righteous,  
but the way of the wicked leads to destruction.**

*Draw me close to you,  
Never let me go.  
I lay it all down again,  
To hear You say that I'm Your friend.  
You are my desire,  
No one else will do,  
'Cause nothing else could take Your place,  
To feel the warmth of Your embrace.  
Help me find the way,  
Bring me back to You.  
You're all I want,  
You're all I've ever needed.  
You're all I want,  
Help me know You are near.*

Visit this place, O Lord, we pray, and drive far from it the snares of the enemy; may your holy angels dwell with us and guard us in peace, and may your blessing be always upon us; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

**Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come,  
your will be done, on earth as in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.  
Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours  
now and for ever.  
Amen.**

The Lord bless us and watch over us; the Lord make his face shine upon us and be gracious to us; the Lord look kindly on us and give us peace.

**Amen.**