

Lent 2023 - Week 4

Merciful – Pure in heart

Let us Pray

please join in with words in bold

May the Lord Almighty gather us into His Kingdom as we seek to follow Christ our Lord and Saviour, and as we turn away from all that is wrong.

**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.**

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

Better is one day in Your courts

Matt Redman

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*How lovely is your dwelling place
Oh, Lord Almighty
For my soul longs and even faints for You
For here my heart is satisfied
Within Your presence
I sing beneath the shadow of Your wings*

*Better is one day in Your courts
Better is one day in Your house
Better is one day in Your courts
Than thousands elsewhere*

*One thing I ask and I would seek
To see Your beauty
To find You in the place Your glory dwells*

*My heart and flesh cry out
For You, the living God
Your Spirit's water for my soul
I've tasted and I've seen
Come once again to me
I will draw near to You
I will draw near to You*

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.

Reflections from last week

Bible Reading: Matt 18:21-35

The Unmerciful Servant

²¹ Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, “Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother or sister who sins against me? Up to seven times?”

²² Jesus answered, “I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times.

²³ “Therefore, the kingdom of heaven is like a king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. ²⁴ As he began the settlement, a man who owed him ten thousand bags of gold was brought to him. ²⁵ Since he was not able to pay, the master ordered that he and his wife and his children and all that he had be sold to repay the debt.

²⁶ "At this the servant fell on his knees before him. 'Be patient with me,' he begged, 'and I will pay back everything.' ²⁷ The servant's master took pity on him, cancelled the debt and let him go.

²⁸ "But when that servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred silver coins. He grabbed him and began to choke him. 'Pay back what you owe me!' he demanded.

²⁹ "His fellow servant fell to his knees and begged him, 'Be patient with me, and I will pay it back.'

³⁰ "But he refused. Instead, he went off and had the man thrown into prison until he could pay the debt. ³¹ When the other servants saw what had happened, they were outraged and went and told their master everything that had happened.

³² "Then the master called the servant in. 'You wicked servant,' he said, 'I cancelled all that debt of yours because you begged me to. ³³ Shouldn't you have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had on you?' ³⁴ In anger his master handed him over to the jailers to be tortured, until he should pay back all he owed.

³⁵ "This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother or sister from your heart."

Reflection – Merciful

Our Lent Conversation – Part 1

What exactly is mercy? What are some situations where we might have to be merciful?

What do we find attractive about being merciful? What are some of the costs it involves?

How much do we feel a need to be shown mercy? Where does it rank compared to the other blessings in the beatitudes?

Bible Reading: Matt 23:25-28

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.

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.

Reflection – Pure in heart

Our Lent Conversation – part 2

What does it mean to have a pure heart? How might you be able to tell that someone does?

What gets in the way of us having pure hearts? How might we go about purifying our hearts?

What does it mean to 'see God' (given that He's invisible)? Why would we want to do that?

What is the link between being pure in heart and seeing God?

Psalm 24

Of David. A psalm.

¹ **The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it,
the world, and all who live in it;**

² **for he founded it on the seas
and established it on the waters.**

³ **Who may ascend the mountain of the Lord?
Who may stand in his holy place?**

⁴ **The one who has clean hands and a pure heart,
who does not trust in an idol
or swear by a false god.**

⁵ **They will receive blessing from the Lord
and vindication from God their Saviour.**

⁶ **Such is the generation of those who seek him,
who seek your face, God of Jacob.**

⁷ **Lift up your heads, you gates;
be lifted up, you ancient doors,**

that the King of glory may come in.

⁸ Who is this King of glory?

The Lord strong and mighty,
the Lord mighty in battle.

⁹ Lift up your heads, you gates;

lift them up, you ancient doors,
that the King of glory may come in.

¹⁰ Who is he, this King of glory?

The Lord Almighty—
he is the King of glory.

Song

Refiner's fire (Purify my heart)

Brian Doerksen ©1990 Mercy/Vineyard Publishing

Purify my heart

Let me be as gold and precious silver

Purify my heart

Let me be as gold, pure gold

Refiner's fire, my heart's one desire

Is to be holy

Set apart for You, Lord

I choose to be holy

Set apart for You, my Master

Ready to do Your will

Purify my heart

Cleanse me from within and make me holy

Purify my heart

Cleanse me from my sin, deep within

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.