

**Worship for Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> July 2021**  
*from Brian & Clare Kennard*

“Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us....with every spiritual blessing.” (Ephesians 1:3)

**Suggested Hymn:** *Come, now is the time to worship*

**COME, NOW IS THE TIME** to worship,  
Come, now is the time to give your heart.  
Come, just as you are to worship,  
Come, just as you are before your God.  
Come.

One day every tongue will confess You are God.  
One day every knee will bow.  
Still, the greatest treasure remains for those  
Who gladly choose You now.

**Prayer time:**

*Be still and focus on the awesome God we serve: great beyond all words, but revealing Himself through His Word, and most clearly through the Word who became flesh - the Lord Jesus Christ. Express your adoration, worship and praise in whatever ways you can.*

**The Bible says,** “If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” ( 1 John 4: 8-9)

*Let God speak to you about the attitudes and actions that need changing in your life. Confess to Him your weaknesses and failures, and receive His cleansing and forgiveness as He has promised.*

**Prayer for today (“Collect”):**

Grant us, Lord,  
not to be anxious about earthly things,  
but to love things heavenly;  
and even now,  
While we are placed among things that are passing away,  
to hold fast to those things which last for ever;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

**.Amen.**

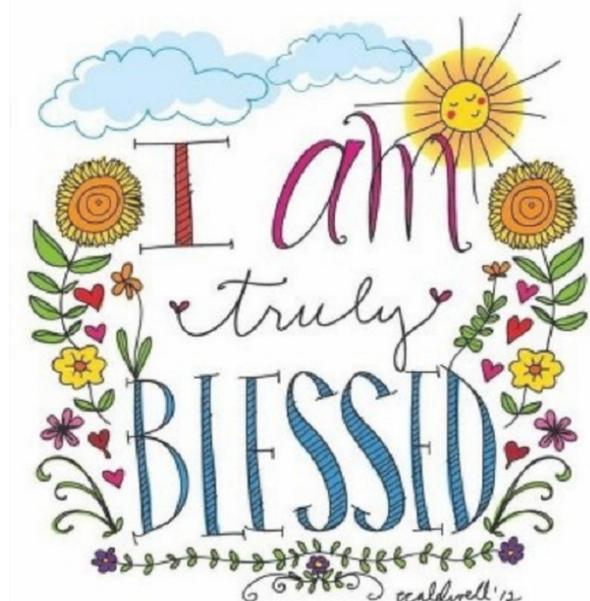
**Reading:** If you have a Bible of your own, please read **Psalm 24**

**Reading: Ephesians 1: 3 - 14**

<sup>3</sup>Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. <sup>4</sup>For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love <sup>5</sup>he predestined us for adoption to sonship through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will— <sup>6</sup>to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves. <sup>7</sup>In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God’s grace <sup>8</sup>that he lavished on us. With all wisdom and understanding, <sup>9</sup>he made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ, <sup>10</sup>to be put into effect when the times reach their fulfilment—to bring unity to all things in heaven and on earth under Christ.

<sup>11</sup>In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will, <sup>12</sup>in order that we, who were the first to put our hope in Christ, might be for the praise of his glory. <sup>13</sup>And you also were included in Christ when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation. When you believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, <sup>14</sup>who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God’s possession—to the praise of his glory.

**Reflection:** ‘...every spiritual blessing’ (Ephesians 1:3) or... **Who we are and what is ours in Christ.**



*(There are lots of Bible references in today's reflection, because I intend -God willing- to use it as the basis for today's Bible Study.)*

First notice that this sentence is written in the past tense – it's a done deal, already accomplished, not a 'could be' or 'might become' but we **have** been blessed. What's more these kind of blessings/riches are eternal and not temporary: 2 Cor 4:18. These riches are INCOMPARABLE (Ephesians 2:7), UNSEARCHABLE (Ephesians 3:8) and GLORIOUS (1:27).

Second, these blessings indicate our status before God. There are many answers to the question, "Who are you?" but from the eternal perspective, a believer can say: I am CHOSEN (John 15:16, Eph 1:4, 1Thess 1: 4-5); I am FORGIVEN (1Peter 3:18). I am indwelt. Perhaps the best answer to the question, "What makes someone a Christian?" is given in Romans 8: 9-11..."the spirit of God lives in you"...see also John 14:23. So, we are now "the temple of the Holy Spirit" (1 Cor 6:19). Hence we believers are now "participators in the Divine nature"(2Peter 1:4), so that "If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation" (2Cor 5:17).

And there's more! We are HOLY (set apart for God's praise and use)...1Peter 2:9. We are SPIRITUAL...Gal 2:20, "The Spirit Himself testifies that we are God's children" (Romans 8: 15-16.) So, as a company of believers we can humbly say "We have the mind of Christ" (1Cor 2:16). We are POWERFUL: "...the incomparably great power for us who believe" (Eph 1: 18-20)..."His Divine power has (past tense again) given us everything we need for life and godliness" (2Peter 1:13)..."Through Christ Jesus the law of the spirit of Life set me free from the law of sin and death" (Romans 8:2)...Greater is He that is in you than he that is in the world" (1John 4:4)

There is, needless to say, so much more that could be added. But the question for each of us to answer is this: How much am I possessing my possessions? And how do we get hold of what has been gifted to us? The answer is easy to state, though not so easy to practise: it is, of course, by FAITH in Jesus Christ that these realities become actual in our experience - believing God's word, entrusting ourselves to Jesus Christ, giving our selves to Him..then we will know

'...every spiritual blessing' Amen.

### Prayers of intercession

In your own words, remember before God...for a genuine and lasting peace in Israel..those in authority in this country and around the world grappling with the present crisis ....all those "on the front line" whether NHS staff, transport workers, shop workers, the emergency services...those most personally affected by the Covid-19 outbreak: the bereaved, those seriously ill, those who have already lost their jobs.. the Church of Jesus Christ as together we seek to witness to the love and care of God in word and action....and the many other difficult problems humanity faces...and for yourself and your family. Remember, too, thankfulness!

### The Lord's Prayer (traditional version):

Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy Name;  
thy kingdom come;  
thy will be done; .  
on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread.  
And forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those who trespass against us  
And lead us not into temptation;  
but deliver us from evil.  
For Thine is the kingdom,  
the power, and the glory,  
for ever and ever. Amen.

### Hymn suggestion: *We bow down*

We bow down and confess  
You are Lord in this place  
We bow down and confess  
You are Lord in this place

We bow down and confess  
You are Lord in this place  
We bow down and confess  
You are Lord in this place

You are all I need  
It's Your face I seek  
In the presence of Your light  
We bow down, we bow down

*(and repeat)*

**The blessing:** Now may the blessing of Almighty God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, be with and remain with us always. **Amen.**

### Teaching/prayer session on the wings

People on A and D wings will be meeting 08.45 to 09.45 today. Next week it will be turn of B & C wings. G & H will come later.

**Brian**