



# Formation Devotional

February 13, 2020 Morning

Forming Worship, Life, and Ministry Together at Christ Covenant Church

---

*Rejoice and be glad, for your father invites you into his loving presence. Use this email as you are able, in whole or in part.*

## Call to Prayer

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! By his great mercy we have been born anew to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. (1 Peter 1:3)

## Opening Prayer

Almighty God, heavenly Father, you have blessed us with the joy and care of children: Give us calm strength and patient wisdom as we bring them up, that we may teach them to love whatever is just and true and good, following the example of our Savior Jesus Christ. Amen. (BCP 829)

## Confession of Sin

Eternal God, in every age you have raised up men and women to live and die in faith. Forgive our indifference to your will. You have commanded us to speak, but we have been silent. You have called us to do what is just, but we have been idle. You have called us to live faithfully, but we have been afraid. Have mercy on us and forgive us. Keep before us faithful people to follow so that living with courage and love, we may work for and inherit the kingdom promised in Jesus Christ. Amen.

*Take a moment to confess your sins, knowing that he hears you, and respond in gratitude according to the assurance of grace.*

Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. (Romans 5:1-2)

## Praying the Psalms

*Read the psalm prayerfully back to God by faith in Christ.*

## Psalm 63

### My Soul Thirsts for You

---

*A Psalm of David, when he was in the wilderness of Judah.*

O God, you are my God; earnestly I seek you;

my soul thirsts for you;

my flesh faints for you,

as in a dry and weary land where there is no water.

<sup>2</sup>So I have looked upon you in the sanctuary,

beholding your power and glory.

<sup>3</sup>Because your steadfast love is better than life,

my lips will praise you.

<sup>4</sup>So I will bless you as long as I live;

in your name I will lift up my hands.

<sup>5</sup>My soul will be satisfied as with fat and rich food,

and my mouth will praise you with joyful lips,

<sup>6</sup>when I remember you upon my bed,

and meditate on you in the watches of the night;

<sup>7</sup>for you have been my help,

and in the shadow of your wings I will sing for joy.

<sup>8</sup>My soul clings to you;

your right hand upholds me.

<sup>9</sup>But those who seek to destroy my life

shall go down into the depths of the earth;

<sup>10</sup>they shall be given over to the power of the sword;

they shall be a portion for jackals.

<sup>11</sup>But the king shall rejoice in God;

all who swear by him shall exult,

---

for the mouths of liars will be stopped.

## New Testament Reading

*Mark wrote more for the Romans, who couldn't care less about Hebrew genealogy. Mark's gospel is filled with action. By the fourteenth verse of chapter 1, Mark already records Jesus preaching about the kingdom of God. Mark loses little time, and his gospel is regarded as the fast-paced account. This brief account of Jesus' earthly ministry highlights Jesus' authority and servanthood.*

*Meditate on the passage, noting a few words or a phrase that stood out or a promise to meditate on today. Take them to God in prayer.*

## Mark 4

### The Parable of the Sower

Again he began to teach beside the sea. And a very large crowd gathered about him, so that he got into a boat and sat in it on the sea, and the whole crowd was beside the sea on the land. <sup>2</sup>And he was teaching them many things in parables, and in his teaching he said to them: <sup>3</sup>"Listen! Behold, a sower went out to sow. <sup>4</sup>And as he sowed, some seed fell along the path, and the birds came and devoured it. <sup>5</sup>Other seed fell on rocky ground, where it did not have much soil, and immediately it sprang up, since it had no depth of soil. <sup>6</sup>And when the sun rose, it was scorched, and since it had no root, it withered away. <sup>7</sup>Other seed fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked it, and it yielded no grain. <sup>8</sup>And other seeds fell into good soil and produced grain, growing up and increasing and yielding thirtyfold and sixtyfold and a hundredfold." <sup>9</sup>And he said, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear."

### The Purpose of the Parables

<sup>10</sup>And when he was alone, those around him with the twelve asked him about the parables. <sup>11</sup>And he said to them, "To you has been given the secret of the kingdom of God, but for those outside everything is in parables, <sup>12</sup>so that

"they may indeed see but not perceive,

and may indeed hear but not understand,

lest they should turn and be forgiven."

<sup>13</sup>And he said to them, "Do you not understand this parable? How then will you understand all the parables? <sup>14</sup>The sower sows the word. <sup>15</sup>And these are the ones along the path, where the word is sown: when they hear, Satan immediately comes and takes away the word that is sown in them. <sup>16</sup>And these are the ones sown on rocky ground: the ones who, when they hear the word, immediately receive it with joy. <sup>17</sup>And they have no root in themselves, but endure for a while; then, when tribulation or persecution arises on account of the word, immediately they fall away. <sup>18</sup>And others are

---

the ones sown among thorns. They are those who hear the word, <sup>19</sup>but the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches and the desires for other things enter in and choke the word, and it proves unfruitful. <sup>20</sup>But those that were sown on the good soil are the ones who hear the word and accept it and bear fruit, thirtyfold and sixtyfold and a hundredfold.”

### **A Lamp Under a Basket**

<sup>21</sup>And he said to them, “Is a lamp brought in to be put under a basket, or under a bed, and not on a stand? <sup>22</sup>For nothing is hidden except to be made manifest; nor is anything secret except to come to light. <sup>23</sup>If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear.” <sup>24</sup>And he said to them, “Pay attention to what you hear: with the measure you use, it will be measured to you, and still more will be added to you. <sup>25</sup>For to the one who has, more will be given, and from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away.”

### **The Parable of the Seed Growing**

<sup>26</sup>And he said, “The kingdom of God is as if a man should scatter seed on the ground. <sup>27</sup>He sleeps and rises night and day, and the seed sprouts and grows; he knows not how. <sup>28</sup>The earth produces by itself, first the blade, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear. <sup>29</sup>But when the grain is ripe, at once he puts in the sickle, because the harvest has come.”

### **The Parable of the Mustard Seed**

<sup>30</sup>And he said, “With what can we compare the kingdom of God, or what parable shall we use for it? <sup>31</sup>It is like a grain of mustard seed, which, when sown on the ground, is the smallest of all the seeds on earth, <sup>32</sup>yet when it is sown it grows up and becomes larger than all the garden plants and puts out large branches, so that the birds of the air can make nests in its shade.”

<sup>33</sup>With many such parables he spoke the word to them, as they were able to hear it. <sup>34</sup>He did not speak to them without a parable, but privately to his own disciples he explained everything.

### **Jesus Calms a Storm**

<sup>35</sup>On that day, when evening had come, he said to them, “Let us go across to the other side.” <sup>36</sup>And leaving the crowd, they took him with them in the boat, just as he was. And other boats were with him. <sup>37</sup>And a great windstorm arose, and the waves were breaking into the boat, so that the boat was already filling. <sup>38</sup>But he was in the stern, asleep on the cushion. And they woke him and said to him, “Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?” <sup>39</sup>And he awoke and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, “Peace! Be still!” And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. <sup>40</sup>He said to them, “Why are you so afraid? Have you still no faith?” <sup>41</sup>And they were filled with great fear and said to one another, “Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?”

### **Prayers of Intercession**

#### **Relationships**

- 
- Pray for the health of families at Christ Covenant and in your community. Pray for love, forgiveness, reconciliation and joy.
  - Pray for parents at Christ Covenant and that God would give them the support they need to flourish in the community. Pray for wisdom to lead their children to become followers of Jesus.

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 debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

## **Benediction**

May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all. (2 Corinthians 13:14)

---

*Wonder what your next step in spiritual formation is? Consider getting involved in a Growth Group.*

*For a handy guide to the devotional elements and an archive of past issues, visit [ccotc.org/devotional](http://ccotc.org/devotional).*