



# Formation Devotional

February 19, 2020 Morning

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

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*Enter into this time expectantly, knowing that God delights to reveal himself to you. Use this email as you are able, in whole or in part.*

## Call to Prayer

The Lord is in his holy temple; let all the earth keep silence before him. (Habakkuk 2:20)

## Opening Prayer

Keep, O Lord, your household the Church in your steadfast faith and love, that through your grace we may proclaim your truth with boldness, and minister your justice with compassion; for the sake of our Savior Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen. (BCP 230)

## Confession of Sin

Lord God, we have given more weight to our successes and our happiness than to your will. We have eaten without a thought for the hungry. We have spoken without an effort to understand others. We have kept silent instead of telling the truth. We have judged others, forgetful that you alone are the Judge. We have acted in accordance with our desires rather than according to your commands. Within the church we have been slow to practice love of our neighbors. And in the world we have not been your faithful servants. Father, forgive us and help us to live as followers of Jesus Christ, your Son, our Savior. Amen.

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

For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. For one will scarcely die for a righteous person-though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die- but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. (Romans 5:6-8)

## Praying the Psalms

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

## Psalm 71

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## **Forsake Me Not When My Strength Is Spent**

In you, O LORD, do I take refuge;

let me never be put to shame!

<sup>2</sup>In your righteousness deliver me and rescue me;

incline your ear to me, and save me!

<sup>3</sup>Be to me a rock of refuge,

to which I may continually come;

you have given the command to save me,

for you are my rock and my fortress.

<sup>4</sup>Rescue me, O my God, from the hand of the wicked,

from the grasp of the unjust and cruel man.

<sup>5</sup>For you, O Lord, are my hope,

my trust, O LORD, from my youth.

<sup>6</sup>Upon you I have leaned from before my birth;

you are he who took me from my mother's womb.

My praise is continually of you.

<sup>7</sup>I have been as a portent to many,

but you are my strong refuge.

<sup>8</sup>My mouth is filled with your praise,

and with your glory all the day.

<sup>9</sup>Do not cast me off in the time of old age;

forsake me not when my strength is spent.

<sup>10</sup>For my enemies speak concerning me;

those who watch for my life consult together

<sup>11</sup>and say, "God has forsaken him;

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pursue and seize him,  
for there is none to deliver him.”

<sup>12</sup>O God, be not far from me;

O my God, make haste to help me!

<sup>13</sup>May my accusers be put to shame and consumed;

with scorn and disgrace may they be covered

who seek my hurt.

<sup>14</sup>But I will hope continually

and will praise you yet more and more.

<sup>15</sup>My mouth will tell of your righteous acts,

of your deeds of salvation all the day,

for their number is past my knowledge.

<sup>16</sup>With the mighty deeds of the Lord GOD I will come;

I will remind them of your righteousness, yours alone.

<sup>17</sup>O God, from my youth you have taught me,

and I still proclaim your wondrous deeds.

<sup>18</sup>So even to old age and gray hairs,

O God, do not forsake me,

until I proclaim your might to another generation,

your power to all those to come.

<sup>19</sup>Your righteousness, O God,

reaches the high heavens.

You who have done great things,

O God, who is like you?

<sup>20</sup>You who have made me see many troubles and calamities

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will revive me again;  
from the depths of the earth  
you will bring me up again.  
<sup>21</sup>You will increase my greatness  
and comfort me again.  
<sup>22</sup>I will also praise you with the harp  
for your faithfulness, O my God;  
I will sing praises to you with the lyre,  
O Holy One of Israel.  
<sup>23</sup>My lips will shout for joy,  
when I sing praises to you;  
my soul also, which you have redeemed.  
<sup>24</sup>And my tongue will talk of your righteous help all the day long,  
for they have been put to shame and disappointed  
who sought to do me hurt.

## **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 8**

### **Jesus Feeds the Four Thousand**

In those days, when again a great crowd had gathered, and they had nothing to eat, he called his disciples to him and said to them, <sup>2</sup>"I have compassion on the crowd, because they have been with me now three days and have nothing to eat. <sup>3</sup>And if I send them away hungry to their homes, they will faint on the way. And some of them have come from far away." <sup>4</sup>And his disciples answered him,

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“How can one feed these people with bread here in this desolate place?”<sup>5</sup> And he asked them, “How many loaves do you have?” They said, “Seven.”<sup>6</sup> And he directed the crowd to sit down on the ground. And he took the seven loaves, and having given thanks, he broke them and gave them to his disciples to set before the people; and they set them before the crowd.<sup>7</sup> And they had a few small fish. And having blessed them, he said that these also should be set before them.<sup>8</sup> And they ate and were satisfied. And they took up the broken pieces left over, seven baskets full.<sup>9</sup> And there were about four thousand people. And he sent them away.<sup>10</sup> And immediately he got into the boat with his disciples and went to the district of Dalmanutha.

### **The Pharisees Demand a Sign**

<sup>11</sup>The Pharisees came and began to argue with him, seeking from him a sign from heaven to test him.<sup>12</sup> And he sighed deeply in his spirit and said, “Why does this generation seek a sign? Truly, I say to you, no sign will be given to this generation.”<sup>13</sup> And he left them, got into the boat again, and went to the other side.

### **The Leaven of the Pharisees and Herod**

<sup>14</sup>Now they had forgotten to bring bread, and they had only one loaf with them in the boat.<sup>15</sup> And he cautioned them, saying, “Watch out; beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod.”<sup>16</sup> And they began discussing with one another the fact that they had no bread.<sup>17</sup> And Jesus, aware of this, said to them, “Why are you discussing the fact that you have no bread? Do you not yet perceive or understand? Are your hearts hardened?<sup>18</sup> Having eyes do you not see, and having ears do you not hear? And do you not remember?<sup>19</sup> When I broke the five loaves for the five thousand, how many baskets full of broken pieces did you take up?” They said to him, “Twelve.”<sup>20</sup> “And the seven for the four thousand, how many baskets full of broken pieces did you take up?” And they said to him, “Seven.”<sup>21</sup> And he said to them, “Do you not yet understand?”

### **Jesus Heals a Blind Man at Bethsaida**

<sup>22</sup>And they came to Bethsaida. And some people brought to him a blind man and begged him to touch him.<sup>23</sup> And he took the blind man by the hand and led him out of the village, and when he had spit on his eyes and laid his hands on him, he asked him, “Do you see anything?”<sup>24</sup> And he looked up and said, “I see people, but they look like trees, walking.”<sup>25</sup> Then Jesus laid his hands on his eyes again; and he opened his eyes, his sight was restored, and he saw everything clearly.<sup>26</sup> And he sent him to his home, saying, “Do not even enter the village.”

### **Peter Confesses Jesus as the Christ**

<sup>27</sup>And Jesus went on with his disciples to the villages of Caesarea Philippi. And on the way he asked his disciples, “Who do people say that I am?”<sup>28</sup> And they told him, “John the Baptist; and others say, Elijah; and others, one of the prophets.”<sup>29</sup> And he asked them, “But who do you say that I am?” Peter answered him, “You are the Christ.”<sup>30</sup> And he strictly charged them to tell no one about him.

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## Jesus Foretells His Death and Resurrection

<sup>31</sup>And he began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes and be killed, and after three days rise again. <sup>32</sup>And he said this plainly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. <sup>33</sup>But turning and seeing his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, "Get behind me, Satan! For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man."

<sup>34</sup>And calling the crowd to him with his disciples, he said to them, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. <sup>35</sup>For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel's will save it. <sup>36</sup>For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul? <sup>37</sup>For what can a man give in return for his soul? <sup>38</sup>For whoever is ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him will the Son of Man also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels."

## Prayers of Intercession

### Church Community

- Pray for Christ Covenant's elders: for wisdom, humility, and courage as they serve the church and city.
- Pray for the global church, especially for Christians in Asia: for underground churches, anti-trafficking policies, and protection from religious extremist groups.
- Pray for the churches in your neighborhood: that God would guide their ministries, provide needed resources, and raise up new leaders.

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)

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*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).*