



Formation Devotional

February 26, 2020 Morning

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

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

But I will sing of your strength, in the morning I will sing of your love; for you are my fortress, my refuge in times of trouble. (Psalm 59:16)

Opening Prayer

Almighty Father, whose blessed Son before his passion prayed for his disciples that they might be one, as you and he are one: Grant that your Church, being bound together in love and obedience to you, may be united in one body by the one Spirit, that the world may believe in him whom you have sent, your Son Jesus Christ our Lord; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen. (BCP 225)

Confession of Sin

Lord Jesus Christ, though being in very nature God, when you came to redeem us you humbled yourself and made yourself nothing. Though you were rich, for our sakes you became poor, so that through your poverty we might become rich. We confess how unlike you we are in our attitudes and actions. We strive for recognition from others, and we sulk and become bitter if we do not get it. We attend to our own needs and concerns, yet fail to care for others except when it serves our purposes. Forgive us our sin and renew our hearts. Grant us to realize that we only achieve greatness and gain our lives by giving them away. Work in us by the power of your Spirit so that we become more like you and so bring glory to our Father in heaven. Amen.

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

Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God. For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life. More than that, we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation. (Romans 5:9-11)

Praying the Psalms

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

Psalm 81

Oh, That My People Would Listen to Me

To the choirmaster: according to The Gittith. Of Asaph.

Sing aloud to God our strength;

shout for joy to the God of Jacob!

²Raise a song; sound the tambourine,

the sweet lyre with the harp.

³Blow the trumpet at the new moon,

at the full moon, on our feast day.

⁴For it is a statute for Israel,

a rule of the God of Jacob.

⁵He made it a decree in Joseph

when he went out over the land of Egypt.

I hear a language I had not known:

⁶“I relieved your shoulder of the burden;

your hands were freed from the basket.

⁷In distress you called, and I delivered you;

I answered you in the secret place of thunder;

I tested you at the waters of Meribah. Selah

⁸Hear, O my people, while I admonish you!

O Israel, if you would but listen to me!

⁹There shall be no strange god among you;

you shall not bow down to a foreign god.

¹⁰I am the LORD your God,
who brought you up out of the land of Egypt.
Open your mouth wide, and I will fill it.

¹¹“But my people did not listen to my voice;
Israel would not submit to me.

¹²So I gave them over to their stubborn hearts,
to follow their own counsels.

¹³Oh, that my people would listen to me,
that Israel would walk in my ways!

¹⁴I would soon subdue their enemies
and turn my hand against their foes.

¹⁵Those who hate the LORD would cringe toward him,
and their fate would last forever.

¹⁶But he would feed you with the finest of the wheat,
and with honey from the rock I would satisfy you.”

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 13

Jesus Foretells Destruction of the Temple

And as he came out of the temple, one of his disciples said to him, “Look, Teacher, what wonderful stones and what wonderful buildings!” ²And Jesus said to him, “Do you see these great buildings? There will not be left here one stone upon another that will not be thrown down.”

Signs of the End of the Age

³And as he sat on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple, Peter and James and John and Andrew asked him privately, ⁴“Tell us, when will these things be, and what will be the sign when all these things are about to be accomplished?” ⁵And Jesus began to say to them, “See that no one leads you astray. ⁶Many will come in my name, saying, ‘I am he!’ and they will lead many astray. ⁷And when you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be alarmed. This must take place, but the end is not yet. ⁸For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be earthquakes in various places; there will be famines. These are but the beginning of the birth pains.

⁹“But be on your guard. For they will deliver you over to councils, and you will be beaten in synagogues, and you will stand before governors and kings for my sake, to bear witness before them. ¹⁰And the gospel must first be proclaimed to all nations. ¹¹And when they bring you to trial and deliver you over, do not be anxious beforehand what you are to say, but say whatever is given you in that hour, for it is not you who speak, but the Holy Spirit. ¹²And brother will deliver brother over to death, and the father his child, and children will rise against parents and have them put to death. ¹³And you will be hated by all for my name’s sake. But the one who endures to the end will be saved.

The Abomination of Desolation

¹⁴“But when you see the abomination of desolation standing where he ought not to be (let the reader understand), then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. ¹⁵Let the one who is on the housetop not go down, nor enter his house, to take anything out, ¹⁶and let the one who is in the field not turn back to take his cloak. ¹⁷And alas for women who are pregnant and for those who are nursing infants in those days! ¹⁸Pray that it may not happen in winter. ¹⁹For in those days there will be such tribulation as has not been from the beginning of the creation that God created until now, and never will be. ²⁰And if the Lord had not cut short the days, no human being would be saved. But for the sake of the elect, whom he chose, he shortened the days. ²¹And then if anyone says to you, ‘Look, here is the Christ!’ or ‘Look, there he is!’ do not believe it. ²²For false christs and false prophets will arise and perform signs and wonders, to lead astray, if possible, the elect. ²³But be on guard; I have told you all things beforehand.

The Coming of the Son of Man

²⁴“But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, ²⁵and the stars will be falling from heaven, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken. ²⁶And then they will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory. ²⁷And then he will send out the angels and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven.

The Lesson of the Fig Tree

²⁸“From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts out its leaves, you know that summer is near. ²⁹So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he is near, at the very gates. ³⁰Truly, I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place. ³¹Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

No One Knows That Day or Hour

³²“But concerning that day or that hour, no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. ³³Be on guard, keep awake. For you do not know when the time will come. ³⁴It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his servants in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to stay awake. ³⁵Therefore stay awake—for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or when the rooster crows, or in the morning— ³⁶lest he come suddenly and find you asleep. ³⁷And what I say to you I say to all: Stay awake.”

Prayers of Intercession

Church Community

- Pray for Christ Covenant’s deacons: for perseverance, compassion, and courage as they serve the church and our city.
- Pray for the global church, especially for those in Africa facing ethnic conflicts, famine, and corrupt leaders.
- Pray for evangelistic efforts throughout Columbia: that the whole body of believers would experience personal gospel renewal and that many others would also come to know Christ.

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.