



Formation Devotional

February 5, 2020 Evening

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

Cling to Jesus and rest in him this evening, knowing that the Father sees you and loves you like his only Son. Use this email as you are able, in whole or in part.

Call to Prayer

You have put gladness in my heart, more than when grain and wine and oil increase. I lie down in peace; at once I fall asleep; for only you, Lord, make me dwell in safety. (Psalm 4:7-8)

Opening Prayer

Almighty God, you have revealed to your Church your eternal Being of glorious majesty and perfect love as one God in Trinity of Persons: Give us grace to continue steadfast in the confession of this faith, and constant in our worship of you, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; for you live and reign, one God, now and for ever. Amen. (BCP 251)

Prayer of Examine

Turn your attention to Christ who is present with you now. With him, review the ordinary events and emotions of your day with gratitude.

1. Where did you move with or feel close to Jesus today?
2. Where did you resist or feel far from Jesus today?
3. Where is Jesus leading you tomorrow? Ask for joy as you follow him.

Praying the Psalms

Prayerfully read the psalm back to God through faith in Jesus Christ.

Psalm 52

The Steadfast Love of God Endures

To the choirmaster. A Maskil of David, when Doeg, the Edomite, came and told Saul, "David has come to the house of Ahimelech."

Why do you boast of evil, O mighty man?

The steadfast love of God endures all the day.

²Your tongue plots destruction,

like a sharp razor, you worker of deceit.

³You love evil more than good,

and lying more than speaking what is right. Selah

⁴You love all words that devour,

O deceitful tongue.

⁵But God will break you down forever;

he will snatch and tear you from your tent;

he will uproot you from the land of the living. Selah

⁶The righteous shall see and fear,

and shall laugh at him, saying,

⁷“See the man who would not make

God his refuge,

but trusted in the abundance of his riches

and sought refuge in his own destruction!”

⁸But I am like a green olive tree

in the house of God.

I trust in the steadfast love of God

forever and ever.

⁹I will thank you forever,

because you have done it.

I will wait for your name, for it is good,

in the presence of the godly.

Old Testament Reading

Genesis gives the account of creation, and the reason why it is so amazing and so corrupt at the same time. The original intent of God for mankind is revealed: God creates the earth for mankind, and mankind for God. Though things go wrong in the beginning, God promises the nomad Abraham that there would be a people who would know Him and walk in His ways in the midst of a broken and rebellious world. The rest of Genesis unfolds in the way God forms this people in the ancient world.

As you read and reflect on this passage, prayerfully consider how God might be revealing himself to you this evening.

Genesis 26

God's Promise to Isaac

Now there was a famine in the land, besides the former famine that was in the days of Abraham. And Isaac went to Gerar to Abimelech king of the Philistines. ²And the LORD appeared to him and said, "Do not go down to Egypt; dwell in the land of which I shall tell you. ³Sojourn in this land, and I will be with you and will bless you, for to you and to your offspring I will give all these lands, and I will establish the oath that I swore to Abraham your father. ⁴I will multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven and will give to your offspring all these lands. And in your offspring all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, ⁵because Abraham obeyed my voice and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws."

Isaac and Abimelech

⁶So Isaac settled in Gerar. ⁷When the men of the place asked him about his wife, he said, "She is my sister," for he feared to say, "My wife," thinking, "lest the men of the place should kill me because of Rebekah," because she was attractive in appearance. ⁸When he had been there a long time, Abimelech king of the Philistines looked out of a window and saw Isaac laughing with Rebekah his wife. ⁹So Abimelech called Isaac and said, "Behold, she is your wife. How then could you say, 'She is my sister'?" Isaac said to him, "Because I thought, 'Lest I die because of her.'" ¹⁰Abimelech said, "What is this you have done to us? One of the people might easily have lain with your wife, and you would have brought guilt upon us." ¹¹So Abimelech warned all the people, saying, "Whoever touches this man or his wife shall surely be put to death."

¹²And Isaac sowed in that land and reaped in the same year a hundredfold. The LORD blessed him, ¹³and the man became rich, and gained more and more until he became very wealthy. ¹⁴He had possessions of flocks and herds and many servants, so that the Philistines envied him. ¹⁵(Now the Philistines had stopped and filled with earth all the wells that his father's servants had dug in the days of Abraham his father.) ¹⁶And Abimelech said to Isaac, "Go away from us, for you are much mightier than we."

¹⁷So Isaac departed from there and encamped in the Valley of Gerar and settled there. ¹⁸And Isaac dug again the wells of water that had been dug in the days of Abraham his father, which the Philistines had stopped after the death of Abraham. And he gave them the names that his father had given them. ¹⁹But when Isaac's servants dug in the valley and found there a well of spring water, ²⁰the herdsmen of Gerar quarreled with Isaac's herdsmen, saying, "The water is ours." So he called the name of the well Esek, because they contended with him. ²¹Then they dug another well, and they quarreled over that also, so he called its name Sitnah. ²²And he moved from there and dug another well, and they did not quarrel over it. So he called its name Rehoboth, saying, "For now the LORD has made room for us, and we shall be fruitful in the land."

²³From there he went up to Beersheba. ²⁴And the LORD appeared to him the same night and said, "I am the God of Abraham your father. Fear not, for I am with you and will bless you and multiply your offspring for my servant Abraham's sake." ²⁵So he built an altar there and called upon the name of the LORD and pitched his tent there. And there Isaac's servants dug a well.

²⁶When Abimelech went to him from Gerar with Ahuzzath his adviser and Phicol the commander of his army, ²⁷Isaac said to them, "Why have you come to me, seeing that you hate me and have sent me away from you?" ²⁸They said, "We see plainly that the LORD has been with you. So we said, let there be a sworn pact between us, between you and us, and let us make a covenant with you, ²⁹that you will do us no harm, just as we have not touched you and have done to you nothing but good and have sent you away in peace. You are now the blessed of the LORD." ³⁰So he made them a feast, and they ate and drank. ³¹In the morning they rose early and exchanged oaths. And Isaac sent them on their way, and they departed from him in peace. ³²That same day Isaac's servants came and told him about the well that they had dug and said to him, "We have found water." ³³He called it Shibah; therefore the name of the city is Beersheba to this day.

³⁴When Esau was forty years old, he took Judith the daughter of Beeri the Hittite to be his wife, and Basemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite, ³⁵and they made life bitter for Isaac and Rebekah.

Prayers of Thanksgiving

Church Community

- Thank God for Christ Covenants youth and children's ministry leaders; thank him for the leaders who are teaching our future generation to know and apply the gospel of Jesus Christ.
- Thank God that he knows every believer—past, present and future—by name.

O God of peace, who taught us that in returning and rest we shall be saved, in quietness and confidence shall be our strength: By the might of your Spirit lift us to your presence, where we may be still and know that you are God; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. (BCP 832)

Benediction

The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you; the Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace. (Numbers 6:24-26)

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.