



Formation Devotional

January 23, 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

Lord, be gracious to us; we long for you. Be our strength every morning, our salvation in time of distress. (Isaiah 33:2)

Opening Prayer

Almighty God, we entrust all who are dear to us to your never-failing care and love, for this life and the life to come, knowing that you are doing for them better things than we can desire or pray for; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. (BCP 831)

Confession of Sin

Have mercy on me, O God, according to your unfailing love; according to your great compassion, blot out my transgressions. Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin. For I know my transgressions, and my sin is always before me. Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight; so you are right in your verdict and justified when you judge. Cleanse me with hyssop and I will be clean; wash me, and I will be whiter than snow. Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones you have crushed rejoice. Hide your face from my sins and blot out all my iniquity. Amen.

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

But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life. (Titus 3:4-7)

Praying the Psalms

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

Psalm 33

The Steadfast Love of the LORD

Shout for joy in the LORD, O you righteous!

Praise befits the upright.

²Give thanks to the LORD with the lyre;

make melody to him with the harp of ten strings!

³Sing to him a new song;

play skillfully on the strings, with loud shouts.

⁴For the word of the LORD is upright,

and all his work is done in faithfulness.

⁵He loves righteousness and justice;

the earth is full of the steadfast love of the LORD.

⁶By the word of the LORD the heavens were made,

and by the breath of his mouth all their host.

⁷He gathers the waters of the sea as a heap;

he puts the deeps in storehouses.

⁸Let all the earth fear the LORD;

let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him!

⁹For he spoke, and it came to be;

he commanded, and it stood firm.

¹⁰The LORD brings the counsel of the nations to nothing;

he frustrates the plans of the peoples.

¹¹The counsel of the LORD stands forever,

the plans of his heart to all generations.

¹²Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD,

the people whom he has chosen as his heritage!

¹³The LORD looks down from heaven;

he sees all the children of man;

¹⁴from where he sits enthroned he looks out

on all the inhabitants of the earth,

¹⁵he who fashions the hearts of them all

and observes all their deeds.

¹⁶The king is not saved by his great army;

a warrior is not delivered by his great strength.

¹⁷The war horse is a false hope for salvation,

and by its great might it cannot rescue.

¹⁸Behold, the eye of the LORD is on those who fear him,

on those who hope in his steadfast love,

¹⁹that he may deliver their soul from death

and keep them alive in famine.

²⁰Our soul waits for the LORD;

he is our help and our shield.

²¹For our heart is glad in him,

because we trust in his holy name.

²²Let your steadfast love, O LORD, be upon us,

even as we hope in you.

New Testament Reading

Matthew was written for a Jewish audience. That's why he starts his gospel with a genealogy. Tracing the lineage of Jesus back to David would be significant to a Hebrew who was wondering if Jesus was the Jewish Messiah. In that light, Matthew's references to the Old Testament reminds us that Jesus is God's fulfillment of the Jewish law and the prophets. The Sermon on the Mount becomes the new identity for the people of God.

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.

Matthew 17

The Transfiguration

And after six days Jesus took with him Peter and James, and John his brother, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. ²And he was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his clothes became white as light. ³And behold, there appeared to them Moses and Elijah, talking with him. ⁴And Peter said to Jesus, "Lord, it is good that we are here. If you wish, I will make three tents here, one for you and one for Moses and one for Elijah." ⁵He was still speaking when, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and a voice from the cloud said, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him." ⁶When the disciples heard this, they fell on their faces and were terrified. ⁷But Jesus came and touched them, saying, "Rise, and have no fear." ⁸And when they lifted up their eyes, they saw no one but Jesus only.

⁹And as they were coming down the mountain, Jesus commanded them, "Tell no one the vision, until the Son of Man is raised from the dead." ¹⁰And the disciples asked him, "Then why do the scribes say that first Elijah must come?" ¹¹He answered, "Elijah does come, and he will restore all things. ¹²But I tell you that Elijah has already come, and they did not recognize him, but did to him whatever they pleased. So also the Son of Man will certainly suffer at their hands." ¹³Then the disciples understood that he was speaking to them of John the Baptist.

Jesus Heals a Boy with a Demon

¹⁴And when they came to the crowd, a man came up to him and, kneeling before him, ¹⁵said, "Lord, have mercy on my son, for he has seizures and he suffers terribly. For often he falls into the fire, and often into the water. ¹⁶And I brought him to your disciples, and they could not heal him." ¹⁷And Jesus answered, "O faithless and twisted generation, how long am I to be with you? How long am I to bear with you? Bring him here to me." ¹⁸And Jesus rebuked the demon, and it came out of him, and the boy was healed instantly. ¹⁹Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and said, "Why could we not cast it out?" ²⁰He said to them, "Because of your little faith. For truly, I say to you, if you have faith like a grain of mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move, and nothing will be impossible for you."

Jesus Again Foretells Death, Resurrection

²²As they were gathering in Galilee, Jesus said to them, "The Son of Man is about to be delivered into the hands of men, ²³and they will kill him, and he will be raised on the third day." And they were greatly distressed.

The Temple Tax

²⁴When they came to Capernaum, the collectors of the two-drachma tax went up to Peter and said, "Does your teacher not pay the tax?" ²⁵He said, "Yes." And when he came into the house, Jesus spoke to him first, saying, "What do you think, Simon? From whom do kings of the earth take toll or tax? From their sons or from others?" ²⁶And when he said, "From others," Jesus said to him, "Then the sons are free. ²⁷However, not to give offense to them, go to the sea and cast a hook and take the first fish that comes up, and when you open its mouth you will find a shekel. Take that and give it to them for me and for yourself."

Prayers of Intercession

Relationships

- Pray for the children and youth in the city. Pray that God would help each of them to know and experience their identity as beloved children of God.
- Pray for the orphans of our city and world. Pray that each of them would know the love of their Heavenly Father and find a home both in an adoptive family and the family of the Church.
- Pray for the Children's Ministry at Christ Covenant. Pray that the staff and volunteers would have the wisdom and discernment to serve the children well and pray that the children would learn to become joyful 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.