



# Formation Devotional

January 28, 2020 Morning

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

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*As you read and pray this morning, remember you are in God's presence. Trust in the Holy Spirit to guide you and direct your thoughts. Use this email as you are able, in whole or in part.*

## Call to Prayer

Then your light will break forth like the dawn, and your healing will quickly appear; then your righteousness will go before you, and the glory of the Lord will be your rear guard. Then you will call, and the Lord will answer; you will cry for help, and he will say: Here am I. (Isaiah 58:8-9)

## Opening Prayer

Most loving Father, whose will it is for us to give thanks for all things, to fear nothing but the loss of you, and to cast all our care on you who care for us: Preserve us from faithless fears and worldly anxieties, that no clouds of this mortal life may hide from us the light of that love which is immortal, and which you have manifested to us in 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 216)

## Confession of Sin

Almighty God, in raising Jesus from the grave, you destroyed the power of sin and death. We confess that we remain captive to doubt and fear, bound by our own selfishness and sin. We waste your gifts, wander from your ways, and forget your love. We overlook our neighbor and are constantly focused on ourselves. Forgive us, God of mercy. Help us to trust your power to change our lives and make us new, that we may know the joy of the fullness of life given in Jesus Christ, the risen Lord. Amen.

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

I acknowledge my sin to you, and I did not cover my iniquity; I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the LORD," and you forgave the iniquity of my sin. (Psalm 32:5)

## Praying the Psalms

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

## Psalm 39

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## What Is the Measure of My Days?

*To the choirmaster: to Jeduthun. A Psalm of David.*

I said, "I will guard my ways,

that I may not sin with my tongue;

I will guard my mouth with a muzzle,

so long as the wicked are in my presence."

<sup>2</sup>I was mute and silent;

I held my peace to no avail,

and my distress grew worse.

<sup>3</sup> My heart became hot within me.

As I mused, the fire burned;

then I spoke with my tongue:

<sup>4</sup>"O LORD, make me know my end

and what is the measure of my days;

let me know how fleeting I am!

<sup>5</sup>Behold, you have made my days a few handbreadths,

and my lifetime is as nothing before you.

Surely all mankind stands as a mere breath! Selah

<sup>6</sup> Surely a man goes about as a shadow!

Surely for nothing they are in turmoil;

man heaps up wealth and does not know who will gather!

<sup>7</sup>"And now, O Lord, for what do I wait?

My hope is in you.

<sup>8</sup>Deliver me from all my transgressions.

Do not make me the scorn of the fool!

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<sup>9</sup>I am mute; I do not open my mouth,

for it is you who have done it.

<sup>10</sup>Remove your stroke from me;

I am spent by the hostility of your hand.

<sup>11</sup>When you discipline a man

with rebukes for sin,

you consume like a moth what is dear to him;

surely all mankind is a mere breath! Selah

<sup>12</sup>“Hear my prayer, O LORD,

and give ear to my cry;

hold not your peace at my tears!

For I am a sojourner with you,

a guest, like all my fathers.

<sup>13</sup>Look away from me, that I may smile again,

before I depart and am no more!”

## **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 20**

### **Laborers in the Vineyard**

“For the kingdom of heaven is like a master of a house who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. <sup>2</sup>After agreeing with the laborers for a denarius a day, he sent them into his vineyard. <sup>3</sup>And going out about the third hour he saw others standing idle in the marketplace, <sup>4</sup>and to them he said, ‘You go into the vineyard too, and whatever is right I will give you.’ <sup>5</sup>So they went.

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Going out again about the sixth hour and the ninth hour, he did the same. <sup>6</sup>And about the eleventh hour he went out and found others standing. And he said to them, 'Why do you stand here idle all day?' <sup>7</sup>They said to him, 'Because no one has hired us.' He said to them, 'You go into the vineyard too.' <sup>8</sup>And when evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his foreman, 'Call the laborers and pay them their wages, beginning with the last, up to the first.' <sup>9</sup>And when those hired about the eleventh hour came, each of them received a denarius. <sup>10</sup>Now when those hired first came, they thought they would receive more, but each of them also received a denarius. <sup>11</sup>And on receiving it they grumbled at the master of the house, <sup>12</sup>saying, 'These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat.' <sup>13</sup>But he replied to one of them, 'Friend, I am doing you no wrong. Did you not agree with me for a denarius?' <sup>14</sup>Take what belongs to you and go. I choose to give to this last worker as I give to you. <sup>15</sup>Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or do you begrudge my generosity?' <sup>16</sup>So the last will be first, and the first last."

### **Jesus Foretells His Death a Third Time**

<sup>17</sup>And as Jesus was going up to Jerusalem, he took the twelve disciples aside, and on the way he said to them, <sup>18</sup>"See, we are going up to Jerusalem. And the Son of Man will be delivered over to the chief priests and scribes, and they will condemn him to death <sup>19</sup>and deliver him over to the Gentiles to be mocked and flogged and crucified, and he will be raised on the third day."

### **A Mother's Request**

<sup>20</sup>Then the mother of the sons of Zebedee came up to him with her sons, and kneeling before him she asked him for something. <sup>21</sup>And he said to her, "What do you want?" She said to him, "Say that these two sons of mine are to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your kingdom." <sup>22</sup>Jesus answered, "You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I am to drink?" They said to him, "We are able." <sup>23</sup>He said to them, "You will drink my cup, but to sit at my right hand and at my left is not mine to grant, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared by my Father." <sup>24</sup>And when the ten heard it, they were indignant at the two brothers. <sup>25</sup>But Jesus called them to him and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. <sup>26</sup>It shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, <sup>27</sup>and whoever would be first among you must be your slave, <sup>28</sup>even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

### **Jesus Heals Two Blind Men**

<sup>29</sup>And as they went out of Jericho, a great crowd followed him. <sup>30</sup>And behold, there were two blind men sitting by the roadside, and when they heard that Jesus was passing by, they cried out, "Lord, have mercy on us, Son of David!" <sup>31</sup>The crowd rebuked them, telling them to be silent, but they cried out all the more, "Lord, have mercy on us, Son of David!" <sup>32</sup>And stopping, Jesus called them and said, "What do you want me to do for you?" <sup>33</sup>They said to him, "Lord, let our eyes be opened." <sup>34</sup>And Jesus in pity touched their eyes, and immediately they recovered their sight and followed him.

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## Prayers of Intercession

### Gospel Identity

- Pray that Christians at Christ Covenant would be formed more and more into Christ's image through the practices of devotion, worship, accountability, hospitality, and rest.
- Pray that God would make you ready to share the reason for your hope within with those around you.

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).*