



Formation Devotional

January 30, 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

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! By his great mercy we have been born anew to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. (1 Peter 1:3)

Opening Prayer

Lord Jesus Christ, who stretched out his arms of love on the hard wood of the cross that everyone might come within the reach of your saving embrace: So clothe us in your Spirit that we, reaching forth our hands in love, may bring those who do not know you to the knowledge and love of you; for the honor of your Name. Amen. (BCP 58)

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 43

Send Out Your Light and Your Truth

Vindicate me, O God, and defend my cause

against an ungodly people,

from the deceitful and unjust man

deliver me!

²For you are the God in whom I take refuge;

why have you rejected me?

Why do I go about mourning

because of the oppression of the enemy?

³Send out your light and your truth;

let them lead me;

let them bring me to your holy hill

and to your dwelling!

⁴Then I will go to the altar of God,

to God my exceeding joy,

and I will praise you with the lyre,

O God, my God.

⁵Why are you cast down, O my soul,

and why are you in turmoil within me?

Hope in God; for I shall again praise him,

my salvation and my God.

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 22

The Parable of the Wedding Feast

And again Jesus spoke to them in parables, saying, ²“The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a wedding feast for his son, ³and sent his servants to call those who were invited to the wedding feast, but they would not come. ⁴Again he sent other servants, saying, ‘Tell those who are invited, “See, I have prepared my dinner, my oxen and my fat calves have been slaughtered, and everything is ready. Come to the wedding feast.”’ ⁵But they paid no attention and went off, one to his farm, another to his business, ⁶while the rest seized his servants, treated them shamefully, and killed them. ⁷The king was angry, and he sent his troops and destroyed those murderers and burned their city. ⁸Then he said to his servants, ‘The wedding feast is ready, but those invited were not worthy. ⁹Go therefore to the main roads and invite to the wedding feast as many as you find.’ ¹⁰And those servants went out into the roads and gathered all whom they found, both bad and good. So the wedding hall was filled with guests.

¹¹“But when the king came in to look at the guests, he saw there a man who had no wedding garment. ¹²And he said to him, ‘Friend, how did you get in here without a wedding garment?’ And he was speechless. ¹³Then the king said to the attendants, ‘Bind him hand and foot and cast him into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’ ¹⁴For many are called, but few are chosen.”

Paying Taxes to Caesar

¹⁵Then the Pharisees went and plotted how to entangle him in his words. ¹⁶And they sent their disciples to him, along with the Herodians, saying, “Teacher, we know that you are true and teach the way of God truthfully, and you do not care about anyone's opinion, for you are not swayed by appearances. ¹⁷Tell us, then, what you think. Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar, or not?” ¹⁸But Jesus, aware of their malice, said, “Why put me to the test, you hypocrites? ¹⁹Show me the coin for the tax.” And they brought him a denarius. ²⁰And Jesus said to them, “Whose likeness and inscription is this?” ²¹They said, “Caesar's.” Then he said to them, “Therefore render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's.” ²²When they heard it, they marveled. And they left him and went away.

Sadducees Ask About the Resurrection

²³The same day Sadducees came to him, who say that there is no resurrection, and they asked him a question, ²⁴saying, "Teacher, Moses said, 'If a man dies having no children, his brother must marry the widow and raise up offspring for his brother.' ²⁵Now there were seven brothers among us. The first married and died, and having no offspring left his wife to his brother. ²⁶So too the second and third, down to the seventh. ²⁷After them all, the woman died. ²⁸In the resurrection, therefore, of the seven, whose wife will she be? For they all had her."

²⁹But Jesus answered them, "You are wrong, because you know neither the Scriptures nor the power of God. ³⁰For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven. ³¹And as for the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was said to you by God: ³²'I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob'? He is not God of the dead, but of the living." ³³And when the crowd heard it, they were astonished at his teaching.

The Great Commandment

³⁴But when the Pharisees heard that he had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together. ³⁵And one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question to test him. ³⁶"Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?" ³⁷And he said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. ³⁸This is the great and first commandment. ³⁹And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. ⁴⁰On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets."

Whose Son Is the Christ?

⁴¹Now while the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them a question, ⁴²saying, "What do you think about the Christ? Whose son is he?" They said to him, "The son of David." ⁴³He said to them, "How is it then that David, in the Spirit, calls him Lord, saying,

⁴⁴"The Lord said to my Lord,

"Sit at my right hand,

until I put your enemies under your feet"?"

⁴⁵If then David calls him Lord, how is he his son?" ⁴⁶And no one was able to answer him a word, nor from that day did anyone dare to ask him any more questions.

Prayers of Intercession

Relationships

- Pray for three of your friends by name. For what do they need prayer? If any do not know Christ, pray that they would come to know him.
- Ask God to reveal to you if there are any friends you can encourage in their faith. Pray that He would reveal them to you and give you the words, wisdom and compassion to share.

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- Pray that God would make you a loving, encouraging, and hospitable friend that is quick to listen and extend compassion.

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.