



Formation Devotional

January 6, 2020 Morning

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

As you enter into his presence this morning, remember that God is with you and for you, because he loves you. Use this email as you are able, in whole or in part.

Call to Prayer

In the morning, Lord, you hear my voice; in the morning I lay my requests before you and wait expectantly. (Psalm 5:3)

Opening Prayer

Almighty and everlasting God, by whose Spirit the whole body of your faithful people is governed and sanctified: Receive our supplications and prayers which we offer before you for all members of your holy Church, that in their vocation and ministry they may truly and godly serve you; through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen. (BCP 57)

Confession of Sin

Gracious Lord, we confess that we dishonor you in our words, thoughts and deeds. Depending on our strength, we stumble. Glorifying in our own righteousness, we reject you. Turning our faces from you, we desire the things of this world to satisfy us. We pray now, Lord, for you to forgive all of our many sins; to cleanse the darkness from our lives, and to turn our faces and our hearts back towards you. We pray these things in the name of your most precious son, Jesus Christ. Amen.

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

My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world. (1 John 2:1-2)

Praying the Psalms

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

Psalm 7

In You Do I Take Refuge

A Shiggaion of David, which he sang to the LORD concerning the words of Cush, a Benjaminite.

1 O LORD my God, in you do I take refuge;

save me from all my pursuers and deliver me,

2 lest like a lion they tear my soul apart,

rending it in pieces, with none to deliver.

3 O LORD my God, if I have done this,

if there is wrong in my hands,

4 if I have repaid my friend with evil

or plundered my enemy without cause,

5 let the enemy pursue my soul and overtake it,

and let him trample my life to the ground

and lay my glory in the dust. Selah

6 Arise, O LORD, in your anger;

lift yourself up against the fury of my enemies;

awake for me; you have appointed a judgment.

7 Let the assembly of the peoples be gathered about you;

over it return on high.

8 The LORD judges the peoples;

judge me, O LORD, according to my righteousness

and according to the integrity that is in me.

9 Oh, let the evil of the wicked come to an end,

and may you establish the righteous—

you who test the minds and hearts,

O righteous God!

10 My shield is with God,

who saves the upright in heart.

11 God is a righteous judge,

and a God who feels indignation every day.

12 If a man does not repent, God will whet his sword;

he has bent and readied his bow;

13 he has prepared for him his deadly weapons,

making his arrows fiery shafts.

14 Behold, the wicked man conceives evil

and is pregnant with mischief

and gives birth to lies.

15 He makes a pit, digging it out,

and falls into the hole that he has made.

16 His mischief returns upon his own head,

and on his own skull his violence descends.

17 I will give to the LORD the thanks due to his righteousness,

and I will sing praise to the name of the LORD, the Most High.

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 4

The Temptation of Jesus

1 Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. 2 And after fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. 3 And the tempter came and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread." 4 But he answered, "It is written,

"Man shall not live by bread alone,

but by every word that comes from the mouth of God."

5 Then the devil took him to the holy city and set him on the pinnacle of the temple 6 and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written,

"He will command his angels concerning you,'

and

"On their hands they will bear you up,

lest you strike your foot against a stone."

7 Jesus said to him, "Again it is written, 'You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.'" 8 Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. 9 And he said to him, "All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me." 10 Then Jesus said to him, "Be gone, Satan! For it is written,

"You shall worship the Lord your God

and him only shall you serve."

11 Then the devil left him, and behold, angels came and were ministering to him.

Jesus Begins His Ministry

12 Now when he heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew into Galilee. 13 And leaving Nazareth he went and lived in Capernaum by the sea, in the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali, 14 so that what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled:

15 "The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali,

the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles—

16 the people dwelling in darkness

have seen a great light,

and for those dwelling in the region and shadow of death,

on them a light has dawned."

17 From that time Jesus began to preach, saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

Jesus Calls the First Disciples

18 While walking by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon (who is called Peter) and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea, for they were fishermen. 19 And he said to them, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." 20 Immediately they left their nets and followed him. 21 And going on from there he saw two other brothers, James the son of Zebedee and John his brother, in the boat with Zebedee their father, mending their nets, and he called them. 22 Immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him.

Jesus Ministers to Great Crowds

23 And he went throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction among the people. 24 So his fame spread throughout all Syria, and they brought him all the sick, those afflicted with various diseases and pains, those oppressed by demons, those having seizures, and paralytics, and he healed them. 25 And great crowds followed him from Galilee and the Decapolis, and from Jerusalem and Judea, and from beyond the Jordan.

Prayers of Intercession

Work

- Ask God to help you recognize the ways you look to your work to give you the comfort and significance that only the peace of Christ can. Confess the ways you fail to recognize God's sovereignty in times of discomfort.
- Pray that he would use times of uncertainty and discomfort in your workplace to realign your sense of calling and the purposes he has for 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)

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.