



Formation Devotional

June 25, 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, our heavenly Father, who has set the solitary in families: We commend to your continual care the homes in which your people dwell. Put far from them every root of bitterness, the desire of vainglory, and the pride of life. Fill them with faith, virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness. Knit together in constant affection those who, in holy wedlock, have been made one flesh. Turn the hearts of the parents to the children, and the hearts of the children to the parents; and so kindle love among us all, that we may be kind to one to another; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. (BCP 828)

Confession of Sin

Almighty God, you are generous in abundance. You have given to us gifts that we do not deserve. You have called us from death to life, granted us forgiveness through the death and resurrection of your Son, Jesus Christ, given us the Holy Spirit, and made us your children.

You have provided for us, both spiritually and materially. Yet we have failed to be thankful and to rejoice in your goodness. We have ignored you and neglected to give you the praise that is due your name.

Forgive us for our ingratitude. Give us eyes that see your hand at work in all areas of our life. Enable us to realize that every good thing comes from you. And deepen our gratitude so that we might serve you with undivided and joyful hearts. In the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Take a moment to confess your sins, knowing that he hears you, and give thanks for his assurance of pardon through the gospel of Jesus Christ.

“‘Yet even now,’ declares the LORD, ‘return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; and rend your hearts and not your garments.’ Return to the LORD your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love; and he relents over disaster.” (Joel 2:12-13)

Praying the Psalms

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

Psalm 96

Worship in the Splendor of Holiness

Oh sing to the LORD a new song;

 sing to the LORD, all the earth!

¹Sing to the LORD, bless his name;

 tell of his salvation from day to day.

²Declare his glory among the nations,

 his marvelous works among all the peoples!

³For great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised;

 he is to be feared above all gods.

⁴For all the gods of the peoples are worthless idols,

 but the LORD made the heavens.

⁵Splendor and majesty are before him;

 strength and beauty are in his sanctuary.

⁶Ascribe to the LORD, O families of the peoples,

 ascribe to the LORD glory and strength!

⁷Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name;

 bring an offering, and come into his courts!

⁸Worship the LORD in the splendor of holiness;^{1a}

 tremble before him, all the earth!

¹⁰Say among the nations, “The LORD reigns!

 Yes, the world is established; it shall never be moved;

he will judge the peoples with equity."

¹¹ Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice;

let the sea roar, and all that fills it;

¹² let the field exult, and everything in it!

Then shall all the trees of the forest sing for joy

¹³ before the LORD, for he comes,

for he comes to judge the earth.

He will judge the world in righteousness,

and the peoples in his faithfulness.

New Testament Reading

Romans—The most systematic of Paul's epistles. This letter explains the plan of salvation for the Gentiles and the Jews. The Apostle Paul wrote it roughly about 56-57 A.D. Paul wrote the letter to the believers in Rome, hence the name "Romans". He wrote it to give them a concrete theological foundation on which to construct their faith and to live for and serve God effectively. The Book of Romans is primarily a work of doctrine and can be divided into four sections: righteousness needed, 1:18-3:20; righteousness provided, 3:21-8:39; righteousness vindicated, 9:1-11:36; righteousness practiced, 12:1-15:13. The main theme of this letter is obvious of course—righteousness.

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.

Romans 11

The Remnant of Israel

I ask, then, has God rejected his people? By no means! For I myself am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham,¹ a member of the tribe of Benjamin. ²God has not rejected his people whom he foreknew. Do you not know what the Scripture says of Elijah, how he appeals to God against Israel? ³"Lord, they have killed your prophets, they have demolished your altars, and I alone am left, and they seek my life." ⁴But what is God's reply to him? "I have kept for myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to Baal." ⁵So too at the present time there is a remnant, chosen by grace. ⁶But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works; otherwise grace would no longer be grace.

⁷What then? Israel failed to obtain what it was seeking. The elect obtained it, but the rest were hardened, ⁸as it is written,

“God gave them a spirit of stupor,

eyes that would not see

and ears that would not hear,

down to this very day.”

⁹And David says,

“Let their table become a snare and a trap,

a stumbling block and a retribution for them;

¹⁰let their eyes be darkened so that they cannot see,

and bend their backs forever.”

Gentiles Grafted In

¹¹So I ask, did they stumble in order that they might fall? By no means! Rather, through their trespass salvation has come to the Gentiles, so as to make Israel jealous. ¹²Now if their trespass means riches for the world, and if their failure means riches for the Gentiles, how much more will their full inclusion^b mean!

¹³Now I am speaking to you Gentiles. Inasmuch then as I am an apostle to the Gentiles, I magnify my ministry ¹⁴in order somehow to make my fellow Jews jealous, and thus save some of them. ¹⁵For if their rejection means the reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance mean but life from the dead? ¹⁶If the dough offered as firstfruits is holy, so is the whole lump, and if the root is holy, so are the branches.

¹⁷But if some of the branches were broken off, and you, although a wild olive shoot, were grafted in among the others and now share in the nourishing root^a of the olive tree, ¹⁸do not be arrogant toward the branches. If you are, remember it is not you who support the root, but the root that supports you.

¹⁹Then you will say, “Branches were broken off so that I might be grafted in.” ²⁰That is true. They were broken off because of their unbelief, but you stand fast through faith. So do not become proud, but fear. ²¹For if God did not spare the natural branches, neither will he spare you. ²²Note then the kindness and the severity of God: severity toward those who have fallen, but God's kindness to you, provided you continue in his kindness. Otherwise you too will be cut off. ²³And even they, if they do not continue in their unbelief, will be grafted in, for God has the power to graft them in again. ²⁴For if you were cut from what is by nature a wild olive tree, and grafted, contrary to nature, into a cultivated olive tree, how much more will these, the natural branches, be grafted back into their own olive tree.

The Mystery of Israel's Salvation

²⁵Lest you be wise in your own sight, I do not want you to be unaware of this mystery, brothers:^[a] a partial hardening has come upon Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. ²⁶And in this way all Israel will be saved, as it is written,

"The Deliverer will come from Zion,
he will banish ungodliness from Jacob";
²⁷"and this will be my covenant with them
when I take away their sins."

²⁸As regards the gospel, they are enemies for your sake. But as regards election, they are beloved for the sake of their forefathers. ²⁹For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable. ³⁰For just as you were at one time disobedient to God but now have received mercy because of their disobedience, ³¹so they too have now been disobedient in order that by the mercy shown to you they also may now^[a] receive mercy. ³²For God has consigned all to disobedience, that he may have mercy on all.

³³Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways!

³⁴"For who has known the mind of the Lord,
or who has been his counselor?"
³⁵"Or who has given a gift to him
that he might be repaid?"

³⁶For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen.

Prayers of Intercession

Relationships

- Pray for those in your immediate family. 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 members of your family whom you can come alongside and encourage in their faith. If so, pray that God would reveal them to you and give you the words, wisdom and compassion to share.

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.