



Formation Devotional

March 27, 2020 Morning

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

Remind yourself that this morning marks another day to enjoy and glorify God. Use this email as you are able, in whole or in part.

Call to Prayer

Satisfy us in the morning with your unfailing love, that we may sing for joy and be glad all our days. (Psalm 90:14)

Opening Prayer

Almighty God, who has created us in your own image: Grant us grace to fearlessly contend against evil and to make no peace with oppression; and, that we may reverently use our freedom, help us to employ it in the maintenance of justice in our communities and among the nations, to the glory of your holy Name; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen. (BCP 209)

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 give thanks for his assurance of pardon through the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Yet we know that a person is not justified by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ, so we also have believed in Christ Jesus, in order to be justified by faith in Christ and not by works of the law, because by works of the law no one will be justified. (Galatians 2:16)

Praying the Psalms

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

Psalm 119:145-176

Qoph

¹⁴⁵ With my whole heart I cry; answer me, O LORD!

I will keep your statutes.

¹⁴⁶ I call to you; save me,

that I may observe your testimonies.

¹⁴⁷ I rise before dawn and cry for help;

I hope in your words.

¹⁴⁸ My eyes are awake before the watches of the night,

that I may meditate on your promise.

¹⁴⁹ Hear my voice according to your steadfast love;

O LORD, according to your justice give me life.

¹⁵⁰ They draw near who persecute me with evil purpose;

they are far from your law.

¹⁵¹ But you are near, O LORD,

and all your commandments are true.

¹⁵² Long have I known from your testimonies

that you have founded them forever.

Resh

¹⁵³ Look on my affliction and deliver me,

for I do not forget your law.

¹⁵⁴ Plead my cause and redeem me;

give me life according to your promise!

¹⁵⁵ Salvation is far from the wicked,

for they do not seek your statutes.

¹⁵⁶ Great is your mercy, O LORD;

give me life according to your rules.

¹⁵⁷ Many are my persecutors and my adversaries,

but I do not swerve from your testimonies.

¹⁵⁸ I look at the faithless with disgust,

because they do not keep your commands.

¹⁵⁹ Consider how I love your precepts!

Give me life according to your steadfast love.

¹⁶⁰ The sum of your word is truth,

and every one of your righteous rules endures forever.

Sin and Shin

¹⁶¹ Princes persecute me without cause,

but my heart stands in awe of your words.

¹⁶² I rejoice at your word

like one who finds great spoil.

¹⁶³ I hate and abhor falsehood,

but I love your law.

¹⁶⁴ Seven times a day I praise you

for your righteous rules.

¹⁶⁵ Great peace have those who love your law;

nothing can make them stumble.

¹⁶⁶ I hope for your salvation, O LORD,

and I do your commandments.

¹⁶⁷ My soul keeps your testimonies;

I love them exceedingly.

¹⁶⁸ I keep your precepts and testimonies,

for all my ways are before you.

Taw

¹⁶⁹ Let my cry come before you, O LORD;

give me understanding according to your word!

¹⁷⁰ Let my plea come before you;

deliver me according to your word.

¹⁷¹ My lips will pour forth praise,

for you teach me your statutes.

¹⁷² My tongue will sing of your word,

for all your commandments are right.

¹⁷³ Let your hand be ready to help me,

for I have chosen your precepts.

¹⁷⁴ I long for your salvation, O LORD,

and your law is my delight.

¹⁷⁵ Let my soul live and praise you,

and let your rules help me.

¹⁷⁶ I have gone astray like a lost sheep; seek your servant,

for I do not forget your commandments.

New Testament Reading

Luke was a Gentile (non-Jewish) physician who wrote for sophisticated non-Jewish readers. He records in great detail in order that Gentile readers would understand the universal appeal of the gospel. Luke also wrote the book of Acts.

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.

Luke 20

The Authority of Jesus Challenged

One day, as Jesus was teaching the people in the temple and preaching the gospel, the chief priests and the scribes with the elders came up ²and said to him, "Tell us by what authority you do these things, or who it is that gave you this authority." ³He answered them, "I also will ask you a question. Now tell me, ⁴was the baptism of John from heaven or from man?" ⁵And they discussed it with one another, saying, "If we say, 'From heaven,' he will say, 'Why did you not believe him?' ⁶But if we say, 'From man,' all the people will stone us to death, for they are convinced that John was a prophet." ⁷So they answered that they did not know where it came from. ⁸And Jesus said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things."

The Parable of the Wicked Tenants

⁹And he began to tell the people this parable: "A man planted a vineyard and let it out to tenants and went into another country for a long while. ¹⁰When the time came, he sent a servant to the tenants, so that they would give him some of the fruit of the vineyard. But the tenants beat him and sent him away empty-handed. ¹¹And he sent another servant. But they also beat and treated him shamefully, and sent him away empty-handed. ¹²And he sent yet a third. This one also they wounded and cast out. ¹³Then the owner of the vineyard said, 'What shall I do? I will send my beloved son; perhaps they will respect him.' ¹⁴But when the tenants saw him, they said to themselves, 'This is the heir. Let us kill him, so that the inheritance may be ours.' ¹⁵And they threw him out of the vineyard and killed him. What then will the owner of the vineyard do to them? ¹⁶He will come and destroy those tenants and give the vineyard to others." When they heard this, they said, "Surely not!" ¹⁷But he looked directly at them and said, "What then is this that is written:

"'The stone that the builders rejected

has become the cornerstone'?"

¹⁸Everyone who falls on that stone will be broken to pieces, and when it falls on anyone, it will crush him."

Paying Taxes to Caesar

¹⁹The scribes and the chief priests sought to lay hands on him at that very hour, for they perceived that he had told this parable against them, but they feared the people. ²⁰So they watched him and sent spies, who pretended to be sincere, that they might catch him in something he said, so as to deliver him up to the authority and jurisdiction of the governor. ²¹So they asked him, "Teacher, we know that you speak and teach rightly, and show no partiality, but truly teach the way of God. ²²Is it lawful for us to give tribute to Caesar, or not?" ²³But he perceived their craftiness, and said to them, ²⁴"Show me a denarius. Whose likeness and inscription does it have?" They said, "Caesar's." ²⁵He said to them, "Then render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." ²⁶And they were not able in the presence of the people to catch him in what he said, but marveling at his answer they became silent.

Sadducees Ask About the Resurrection

²⁷There came to him some Sadducees, those who deny that there is a resurrection, ²⁸and they asked him a question, saying, "Teacher, Moses wrote for us that if a man's brother dies, having a wife but no children, the man must take the widow and raise up offspring for his brother. ²⁹Now there were seven brothers. The first took a wife, and died without children. ³⁰And the second ³¹and the third took her, and likewise all seven left no children and died. ³²Afterward the woman also died. ³³In the resurrection, therefore, whose wife will the woman be? For the seven had her as wife."

³⁴And Jesus said to them, "The sons of this age marry and are given in marriage, ³⁵but those who are considered worthy to attain to that age and to the resurrection from the dead neither marry nor are given in marriage, ³⁶for they cannot die anymore, because they are equal to angels and are sons of God, being sons of the resurrection. ³⁷But that the dead are raised, even Moses showed, in the passage about the bush, where he calls the Lord the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob. ³⁸Now he is not God of the dead, but of the living, for all live to him." ³⁹Then some of the scribes answered, "Teacher, you have spoken well." ⁴⁰For they no longer dared to ask him any question.

Whose Son Is the Christ?

⁴¹But he said to them, "How can they say that the Christ is David's son? ⁴²For David himself says in the Book of Psalms,

"The Lord said to my Lord,

"Sit at my right hand,

⁴³ until I make your enemies your footstool."

⁴⁴David thus calls him Lord, so how is he his son?"

Beware of the Scribes

⁴⁵And in the hearing of all the people he said to his disciples, ⁴⁶"Beware of the scribes, who like to walk around in long robes, and love greetings in the marketplaces and the best seats in the synagogues and the places of honor at feasts, ⁴⁷who devour widows' houses and for a pretense make long prayers. They will receive the greater condemnation."

Prayers of Intercession

Neighborhood

- Pray that Christians would oppose injustice in all forms and work towards racial reconciliation and healing in their neighborhoods.
- Pray for strength as strangers and newcomers to Columbia transition into a new culture and way of life. Pray that they would be surrounded by encouraging neighbors and find jobs to support their families.

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- Pray that formerly incarcerated men and women would be welcomed back by friends and family with love and grace. Pray that severed relationships would be mended and strengthened.

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.