



Formation Devotional

March 5, 2020 Evening

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

Take a moment to slow down and turn your thoughts to God. Use this email as you are able, in whole or in part.

Call to Prayer

Into your hands I commend my spirit, for you have redeemed me, O Lord, O God of truth. (Psalm 31:5)

Opening Prayer

Look with mercy, O God our Father, on all whose increasing years bring them weakness, distress, or isolation. Provide for them homes of dignity and peace; give them understanding helpers, and the willingness to accept help; and, as their strength diminishes, increase their faith and their assurance of your love. This we ask in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. (BCP 830)

Prayer of Examine

Turn your attention to Christ who is present with you now. With him, review the ordinary events and emotions of your day with gratitude.

1. Where did you move with or feel close to Jesus today?
2. Where did you resist or feel far from Jesus today?
3. Where is Jesus leading you tomorrow? Ask for joy as you follow him.

Praying the Psalms

Prayerfully read the psalm back to God through faith in Jesus Christ.

Psalm 94

The LORD Will Not Forsake His People

O LORD, God of vengeance,

O God of vengeance, shine forth!

²Rise up, O judge of the earth;

repay to the proud what they deserve!

³O LORD, how long shall the wicked,
how long shall the wicked exult?

⁴They pour out their arrogant words;
all the evildoers boast.

⁵They crush your people, O LORD,
and afflict your heritage.

⁶They kill the widow and the sojourner,
and murder the fatherless;

⁷and they say, “The LORD does not see;
the God of Jacob does not perceive.”

⁸Understand, O dullest of the people!
Fools, when will you be wise?

⁹He who planted the ear, does he not hear?
He who formed the eye, does he not see?

¹⁰He who disciplines the nations, does he not rebuke?
He who teaches man knowledge—

¹¹ the LORD—knows the thoughts of man,
that they are but a breath.

¹²Blessed is the man whom you discipline, O LORD,
and whom you teach out of your law,

¹³to give him rest from days of trouble,
until a pit is dug for the wicked.

¹⁴For the LORD will not forsake his people;
he will not abandon his heritage;

¹⁵for justice will return to the righteous,

and all the upright in heart will follow it.

¹⁶Who rises up for me against the wicked?

Who stands up for me against evildoers?

¹⁷If the LORD had not been my help,

my soul would soon have lived in the land of silence.

¹⁸When I thought, "My foot slips,"

your steadfast love, O LORD, held me up.

¹⁹When the cares of my heart are many,

your consolations cheer my soul.

²⁰Can wicked rulers be allied with you,

those who frame injustice by statute?

²¹They band together against the life of the righteous

and condemn the innocent to death.

²²But the LORD has become my stronghold,

and my God the rock of my refuge.

²³He will bring back on them their iniquity

and wipe them out for their wickedness;

the LORD our God will wipe them out.

Old Testament Reading

Genesis gives the account of creation, and the reason why it is so amazing and so corrupt at the same time. The original intent of God for mankind is revealed: God creates the earth for mankind, and mankind for God. Though things go wrong in the beginning, God promises the nomad Abraham that there would be a people who would know Him and walk in His ways in the midst of a broken and rebellious world. The rest of Genesis unfolds in the way God forms this people in the ancient world.

As you read and reflect on this passage, prayerfully consider how God might be revealing himself to you this evening.

Genesis 47

Jacob's Family Settles in Goshen

So Joseph went in and told Pharaoh, "My father and my brothers, with their flocks and herds and all that they possess, have come from the land of Canaan. They are now in the land of Goshen." ²And from among his brothers he took five men and presented them to Pharaoh. ³Pharaoh said to his brothers, "What is your occupation?" And they said to Pharaoh, "Your servants are shepherds, as our fathers were." ⁴They said to Pharaoh, "We have come to sojourn in the land, for there is no pasture for your servants' flocks, for the famine is severe in the land of Canaan. And now, please let your servants dwell in the land of Goshen." ⁵Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Your father and your brothers have come to you. ⁶The land of Egypt is before you. Settle your father and your brothers in the best of the land. Let them settle in the land of Goshen, and if you know any able men among them, put them in charge of my livestock."

⁷Then Joseph brought in Jacob his father and stood him before Pharaoh, and Jacob blessed Pharaoh. ⁸And Pharaoh said to Jacob, "How many are the days of the years of your life?" ⁹And Jacob said to Pharaoh, "The days of the years of my sojourning are 130 years. Few and evil have been the days of the years of my life, and they have not attained to the days of the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their sojourning." ¹⁰And Jacob blessed Pharaoh and went out from the presence of Pharaoh. ¹¹Then Joseph settled his father and his brothers and gave them a possession in the land of Egypt, in the best of the land, in the land of Rameses, as Pharaoh had commanded. ¹²And Joseph provided his father, his brothers, and all his father's household with food, according to the number of their dependents.

Joseph and the Famine

¹³Now there was no food in all the land, for the famine was very severe, so that the land of Egypt and the land of Canaan languished by reason of the famine. ¹⁴And Joseph gathered up all the money that was found in the land of Egypt and in the land of Canaan, in exchange for the grain that they bought. And Joseph brought the money into Pharaoh's house. ¹⁵And when the money was all spent in the land of Egypt and in the land of Canaan, all the Egyptians came to Joseph and said, "Give us food. Why should we die before your eyes? For our money is gone." ¹⁶And Joseph answered, "Give your livestock, and I will give you food in exchange for your livestock, if your money is gone." ¹⁷So they brought their livestock to Joseph, and Joseph gave them food in exchange for the horses, the flocks, the herds, and the donkeys. He supplied them with food in exchange for all their livestock that year. ¹⁸And when that year was ended, they came to him the following year and said to him, "We will not hide from my lord that our money is all spent. The herds of livestock are my lord's. There is nothing left in the sight of my lord but our bodies and our land. ¹⁹Why should we die before your eyes, both we and our land? Buy us and our land for food, and we with our land will be servants to Pharaoh. And give us seed that we may live and not die, and that the land may not be desolate."

²⁰So Joseph bought all the land of Egypt for Pharaoh, for all the Egyptians sold their fields, because the famine was severe on them. The land became Pharaoh's. ²¹As for the people, he made servants of them from one end of Egypt to the other. ²²Only the land of the priests he did not buy, for the priests had a

fixed allowance from Pharaoh and lived on the allowance that Pharaoh gave them; therefore they did not sell their land.

²³Then Joseph said to the people, “Behold, I have this day bought you and your land for Pharaoh. Now here is seed for you, and you shall sow the land. ²⁴And at the harvests you shall give a fifth to Pharaoh, and four fifths shall be your own, as seed for the field and as food for yourselves and your households, and as food for your little ones.” ²⁵And they said, “You have saved our lives; may it please my lord, we will be servants to Pharaoh.” ²⁶So Joseph made it a statute concerning the land of Egypt, and it stands to this day, that Pharaoh should have the fifth; the land of the priests alone did not become Pharaoh's.

²⁷Thus Israel settled in the land of Egypt, in the land of Goshen. And they gained possessions in it, and were fruitful and multiplied greatly. ²⁸And Jacob lived in the land of Egypt seventeen years. So the days of Jacob, the years of his life, were 147 years.

²⁹And when the time drew near that Israel must die, he called his son Joseph and said to him, “If now I have found favor in your sight, put your hand under my thigh and promise to deal kindly and truly with me. Do not bury me in Egypt, ³⁰but let me lie with my fathers. Carry me out of Egypt and bury me in their burying place.” He answered, “I will do as you have said.” ³¹And he said, “Swear to me”; and he swore to him. Then Israel bowed himself upon the head of his bed.

Prayers of Thanksgiving

Relationships

- Thank God for the close friendships in your life in which you can love, counsel, and pray for one another.
- Thank God for giving us the greatest friendship: a love that laid down his life for his friends.
- Thank him for our union with Christ and how the Spirit transforms us to become more like Jesus in our friendships.

Look down, O Lord, from your heavenly throne, and illuminate this night with your celestial brightness; that by night as by day your people may glorify your holy Name; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. (BCP 133)

Benediction

The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you; the Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace. (Numbers 6:24-26)

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.