



Formation Devotional

March 9, 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

The whole earth is filled with awe at your wonders; where morning dawns, where evening fades, you call forth songs of joy. (Psalm 65:8)

Opening Prayer

Almighty God our heavenly Father, who declares his glory and shows forth his handiwork in the heavens and in the earth: Deliver us in our various occupations from the service of self alone, that we may do the work which you give us to do in truth and beauty and for the common good; for the sake of him who came among us as one that serves, your Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen. (BCP 210)

Confession of Sin

Gracious God, our sins are too heavy to carry, too real to hide, and too deep to undo. Forgive what our lips tremble to name, what our hearts can no longer bear, and what has become for us a burden of guilt and shame. Set us free from a past that we cannot change; open to us a future in which we can be changed; and grant us grace to grow more and more in your likeness and image; through Jesus Christ, the light of the world. Amen.

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

There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. (Romans 8:1)

Praying the Psalms

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

Psalm 97

The LORD Reigns

The LORD reigns, let the earth rejoice;

let the many coastlands be glad!

²Clouds and thick darkness are all around him;

righteousness and justice are the foundation of his throne.

³Fire goes before him

and burns up his adversaries all around.

⁴His lightnings light up the world;

the earth sees and trembles.

⁵The mountains melt like wax before the LORD,

before the Lord of all the earth.

⁶The heavens proclaim his righteousness,

and all the peoples see his glory.

⁷All worshipers of images are put to shame,

who make their boast in worthless idols;

worship him, all you gods!

⁸Zion hears and is glad,

and the daughters of Judah rejoice,

because of your judgments, O LORD.

⁹For you, O LORD, are most high over all the earth;

you are exalted far above all gods.

¹⁰O you who love the LORD, hate evil!

He preserves the lives of his saints;

he delivers them from the hand of the wicked.

¹¹Light is sown for the righteous,

and joy for the upright in heart.

¹²Rejoice in the LORD, O you righteous,
and give thanks to his holy name!

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 5

Jesus Calls the First Disciples

On one occasion, while the crowd was pressing in on him to hear the word of God, he was standing by the lake of Gennesaret, ²and he saw two boats by the lake, but the fishermen had gone out of them and were washing their nets. ³Getting into one of the boats, which was Simon's, he asked him to put out a little from the land. And he sat down and taught the people from the boat. ⁴And when he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, "Put out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch." ⁵And Simon answered, "Master, we toiled all night and took nothing! But at your word I will let down the nets." ⁶And when they had done this, they enclosed a large number of fish, and their nets were breaking. ⁷They signaled to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both the boats, so that they began to sink. ⁸But when Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord." ⁹For he and all who were with him were astonished at the catch of fish that they had taken, ¹⁰and so also were James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching men." ¹¹And when they had brought their boats to land, they left everything and followed him.

Jesus Cleanses a Leper

¹²While he was in one of the cities, there came a man full of leprosy. And when he saw Jesus, he fell on his face and begged him, "Lord, if you will, you can make me clean." ¹³And Jesus stretched out his hand and touched him, saying, "I will; be clean." And immediately the leprosy left him. ¹⁴And he charged him to tell no one, but "go and show yourself to the priest, and make an offering for your cleansing, as Moses commanded, for a proof to them." ¹⁵But now even more the report about him went abroad, and great crowds gathered to hear him and to be healed of their infirmities. ¹⁶But he would withdraw to desolate places and pray.

Jesus Heals a Paralytic

¹⁷On one of those days, as he was teaching, Pharisees and teachers of the law were sitting there, who had come from every village of Galilee and Judea and from Jerusalem. And the power of the Lord

was with him to heal. ¹⁸And behold, some men were bringing on a bed a man who was paralyzed, and they were seeking to bring him in and lay him before Jesus, ¹⁹but finding no way to bring him in, because of the crowd, they went up on the roof and let him down with his bed through the tiles into the midst before Jesus. ²⁰And when he saw their faith, he said, “Man, your sins are forgiven you.” ²¹And the scribes and the Pharisees began to question, saying, “Who is this who speaks blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but God alone?” ²²When Jesus perceived their thoughts, he answered them, “Why do you question in your hearts? ²³Which is easier, to say, ‘Your sins are forgiven you,’ or to say, ‘Rise and walk’? ²⁴But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins” —he said to the man who was paralyzed— “I say to you, rise, pick up your bed and go home.” ²⁵And immediately he rose up before them and picked up what he had been lying on and went home, glorifying God. ²⁶And amazement seized them all, and they glorified God and were filled with awe, saying, “We have seen extraordinary things today.”

Jesus Calls Levi

²⁷After this he went out and saw a tax collector named Levi, sitting at the tax booth. And he said to him, “Follow me.” ²⁸And leaving everything, he rose and followed him.

²⁹And Levi made him a great feast in his house, and there was a large company of tax collectors and others reclining at table with them. ³⁰And the Pharisees and their scribes grumbled at his disciples, saying, “Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?” ³¹And Jesus answered them, “Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. ³²I have not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance.”

A Question About Fasting

³³And they said to him, “The disciples of John fast often and offer prayers, and so do the disciples of the Pharisees, but yours eat and drink.” ³⁴And Jesus said to them, “Can you make wedding guests fast while the bridegroom is with them? ³⁵The days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast in those days.” ³⁶He also told them a parable: “No one tears a piece from a new garment and puts it on an old garment. If he does, he will tear the new, and the piece from the new will not match the old. ³⁷And no one puts new wine into old wineskins. If he does, the new wine will burst the skins and it will be spilled, and the skins will be destroyed. ³⁸But new wine must be put into fresh wineskins. ³⁹And no one after drinking old wine desires new, for he says, ‘The old is good.’”

Prayers of Intercession

Work

- Confess the ways that you look to your work to be the source of your identity and give you things that only God can provide.
- Pray that you will hear the voice of the God who calls, and that you might work knowing your identity is rooted in the finished work of Christ.

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.