



THE BOOK OF PHILIPPIANS CORPORATE LITURGIES PROJECT

How does a community of faith stay anchored together to the reality of God’s transforming love during a time of global pandemic? This question has been nagging at me since COVID-19 threw a hand grenade in our proverbial living room back in March. Thankfully, we are not the first generation to be asking this question. Over the last 2,000 years, the church has learned to flourish despite wars, plagues, famines, and persecution.

One of the secrets to the church’s success during the darkest of times has been the development of corporate rhythms that help people practice the presence of God through prayerful meditation on Scripture. In fact, two reform movements that completely reshaped Western civilization started at least partially as a result of communities organized around a simple daily habit of silence, Scripture, self-examination, and prayer (The Rule of St. Benedict in the 6th century and Thomas Cranmer’s Book of Common Prayer in the 16th century).

During this season when so much of our embodied corporate life together has been scattered and shuttered, we want to invite our community to stay spiritually and emotionally unified through regular rhythms and commitments that enable us to grow, learn, and change together. We are calling these formative practices “Corporate Liturgies.”

This fall we will be teaching through the book of Philippians and exploring God’s vision for becoming a joyful, united, wholehearted community of faith. In conjunction with this series, we have created this weekly guide to help us slow down to be with Jesus and allow the Holy Spirit to apply the truths of this letter to our lives. Our hope is that engaging the presence of God together will create a shared vision, language, and desires that unite our hearts & souls despite our physical distance.

Our suggestion is that you set aside a regular time either personally or as a group (MC, discipleship, families, roommates) to work through this guide. Consider starting with 10-15 minutes in the morning, at lunch, or in the evening before bed (or multiple times if possible). Don’t get discouraged if you get distracted or miss a few days - that’s completely normal! Remember the goal isn’t to get it perfect, but to open ourselves to God’s loving presence and invite him to transform us.

Peace,
Pastor Brandon

HOW DO I USE THIS GUIDE?

Our daily liturgy is centered around four movements of practicing God's presence: Silence, Scripture, Self-Examination, and Supplication.¹

Silence

- Purpose: Silent prayer is described as simply "being with God." This practice moves our hearts from a posture of transaction to a posture of relationship.
- Example: Before beginning, take a deep breath. Center your thoughts by praying a short phrase like, "Here I am," "Come Holy Spirit," or simply "Jesus."

Scripture

- Purpose: Prayerfully reading Scripture is an important discipline for believers. This act renews our minds, and immerses us in God's life and action. Each week we will read slowly and meditatively through one passage of Scripture.
- Example: Move slowly. Ask the Lord to reveal what He has for you. As you read, write down or highlight parts that stand out to you. What does this text teach you about God, others, and yourself? How do you need to respond?

Self-Examination

- Purpose: During Self-Examination, we are inviting God to reveal to us our true state (Psalm 139). Without the Holy Spirit, we are unable to clearly see where we may need conviction, wisdom, and healing. This movement requires us to look within, and respond with open hands.
- Example: Observe how God is present to you in Scripture. What stood out to you? What impacted you? Examine what you are thinking, feeling, desiring, or avoiding in response to the passage.

Supplication

- Purpose: Supplication invites us to acknowledge our limitations, and God's ability to provide. This movement increases our dependence on God. We have provided for you specific prayers of supplication to guide your time.

¹ This prayer structure is outlined by Pastor Rich Villodas in his prayer guide "Midday Prayers for Every Day." Available at www.richvillodas.com.

Week 3: Philippians 1:27-30

September 28-October 4

27 Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel, 28 and not frightened in anything by your opponents. This is a clear sign to them of their destruction, but of your salvation, and that from God. 29 For it has been granted to you that for the sake of Christ you should not only believe in him but also suffer for his sake, 30 engaged in the same conflict that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.

Monday, September 28

- Silence
- Scripture Meditation
 - What qualities does Paul reference in Chapter 1 to describe a “life worthy of the gospel of Christ?”
- Self-Examination
 - Observe how God is present to you in Scripture today. Examine what you are thinking, feeling, desiring, or avoiding in response to this passage.
- Supplication
 - As you review your list of qualities, ask yourself, “What do I need grace for today?” Name the qualities, and ask God to help.

Tuesday, September 29

- Silence
- Scripture Meditation
 - What does it look like to “stand firm in one spirit, with one mind?” How can you be an advocate for spiritual unity?
- Self-Examination
 - Observe how God is present to you in Scripture today. Examine what you are thinking, feeling, desiring, or avoiding in response to this passage.
- Supplication
 - Ask God to give you a deep love for your brothers and sisters in Christ. Invite Him to unite “every tribe, tongue, and nation” here in Indianapolis (Rev. 7:9).

Wednesday, September 30

- Silence
- Scripture Meditation
 - Paul writes that as we stand firm as “one spirit.... striving side by side for the faith of the gospel”, we should “not (be) frightened in anything by our opponents.” What areas in your life have you allowed fear to creep in?

- Self-Examination
 - Observe how God is present to you in Scripture today. Examine what you are thinking, feeling, desiring, or avoiding in response to this passage.
- Supplication
 - Use the Lord's Prayer to guide your supplication today.

Thursday, October 1

- Silence
- Scripture Meditation
 - How are believers' reactions to the difficulties of life a testimony to their salvation? What does knowing that our future is secure free us from? And what does it free us for?
- Self-Examination
 - Observe how God is present to you in Scripture today. Examine what you are thinking, feeling, desiring, or avoiding in response to this passage.
- Supplication
 - Read Ephesians 2:8-9. Praise God for the gift of His salvation in your own life. Ask Him to bring to mind the name of someone that has yet to receive this gift. Spend time asking God to lead that person to Himself.

Friday, October 2

- Silence
- Scripture Meditation
 - As believers, we are called to "suffer for (Christ's) sake." Reflect on why God invites us into suffering.
- Self-Examination
 - Observe how God is present to you in Scripture today. Examine what you are thinking, feeling, desiring, or avoiding in response to this passage.
- Supplication
 - Prayerfully acknowledge that suffering reminds us of our dependence on God. Praise Him for His ability to sustain us, even on our hardest days. Ask Him to give you what you need for today.