



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 6: Philippians 3:1-11

October 19-25

1 Finally, my brothers, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you is no trouble to me and is safe for you. 2 Look out for the dogs, look out for the evildoers, look out for those who mutilate the flesh. 3 For we are the circumcision, who worship by the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh— 4 though I myself have reason for confidence in the flesh also. If anyone else thinks he has reason for confidence in the flesh, I have more: 5 circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee; 6 as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law, blameless. 7 But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ. 8 Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ 9 and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith— 10 that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, 11 that by any means possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead.

Monday, October 19

- Silence
- Scripture Meditation
 - What does corruption look like in our 21st century context? Where must we, as believers, be on guard?
- 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
 - Reflect back on Philippians 1:9-10. Ask the Holy Spirit to give mature eyes that see with “knowledge and all discernment” that you may “approve what is excellent.”

Tuesday, October 20

- Silence
- Scripture Meditation
 - Paul lists his resume in chapter 3. What privilege or life-gains are you tempted to lean on to give you confidence?
- 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 the Father to help you put confidence in Christ alone. Invite Him to help you see how these things pale in comparison to knowing Christ.

Wednesday, October 21

- Silence
- Scripture Meditation
 - How have you experienced disappointment in the things of the world? When have they felt like “rubbish?”
- 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
 - Pray “Lord Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me.”

Thursday, October 22

- Silence
- Scripture Meditation
 - Meditate on the “surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus as (your) Lord.” When did you first begin to know Him? How are you experiencing His Lordship in your life today?
- 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
 - Invite the Father to take His rightful place as Lord of your heart. Acknowledge your dependence on Him to guide and direct you.

Friday, October 23

- Silence
- Scripture Meditation
 - Make a list with two columns. On the left, describe what righteousness that comes from the law looks like. On the right, describe what righteous through faith in Christ looks like.
- 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
 - Confess your inability to achieve righteousness on your own. Confess your need for Christ, and the righteousness He gives us freely through faith in Him.