



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 7: Philippians 3:12-21

October 26-November 1

12 Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect, but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. 13 Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own. But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, 14 I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. 15 Let those of us who are mature think this way, and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal that also to you. 16 Only let us hold true to what we have attained.

17 Brothers, join in imitating me, and keep your eyes on those who walk according to the example you have in us. 18 For many, of whom I have often told you and now tell you even with tears, walk as enemies of the cross of Christ. 19 Their end is destruction, their god is their belly, and they glory in their shame, with minds set on earthly things. 20 But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, 21 who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself.

Monday, October 26

- Silence
- Scripture Meditation
 - Christ Jesus has made us His own. How does this reality transform the way we live?
- 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 help you release your human striving, and to live in the fullness of knowing Christ has made you His own.

Tuesday, October 27

- Silence
- Scripture Meditation
 - The book of Philippians gives believers a great example in Paul of a mature Christian walk. Paul tells us to look for those around us who also walk in this example. Who has God placed in your life to model the way of Jesus?
- 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 shape your life into one that is marked by faithfulness to Him. Acknowledge that you can do no good apart from Him.

Wednesday, October 28

- Silence
- Scripture Meditation
 - Spend a few minutes reflecting on the sober reality of a life that is lived as “an enemy 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
 - Ask the Lord to bring to mind names of individuals that are living in opposition to Christ. Pray the Lord’s Prayer for each one of them today. Intercede on their behalf, asking God to bring His kingdom about in their lives.

Thursday, October 29

- Silence
- Scripture Meditation
 - What does it look like to live as a citizen of heaven? How is this different than living as a citizen of America, Indiana, or Indianapolis?
- 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.

Friday, October 30

- Silence
- Scripture Meditation
 - Reflect on Jesus’ power to transform us, and to subject all things to Himself. Worship Him for being a powerful God.
- 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 Jesus to take your “lowly body” and transform it into His “glorious body.”