

Meditation and Study – spiritual disciplines

Intro: Proverbs 23:7 – as we think, so we are. It matters what is going through your mind.

I. Meditation

A. There are good reasons to meditate.

1. brings success and prosperity (Joshua 1:8)
2. whatever you do will prosper (Psalm 1:1-3)
3. you will be wiser than your enemies (Psalm 119:97,98)
4. you will be wiser than your teachers (Psalm 119:99,100)
5. You will be filled with joy (Psalm 63:5,6)
6. others will see God working in your life (I Tim. 4:15)

B. Biblical words for meditation show us that it is the opposite of Eastern meditation; that which empties the mind. Biblical meditation fills it.

1. “haqah” – to murmur in pleasure, or to ponder.
2. “sychah” – reflection with deep devotion or contemplation, thoughtful utterances of scripture (Lucado’s one word sentence chapter; looking at a cross)
3. “nigayown” – a musical rotation, a murmuring sound (as in many of our more modern songs and praise choruses)
4. “melatao” – to carefully revolve in the mind; a prayerful review of Scriptural truth.

C. It is a communing with God in the language of God’s Word.

D. It is building your day and night around Scripture.

E. It is FILLING your mind with the thoughts of God.

II. What Keeps Us From Meditating As We Ought?

A. Too often, we are already meditating. The house is already full.

1. two common meditations are the revenge scenario and the power/popularity scenario.
 2. we envision ourselves as sports heroes, rock stars, or driving a Humvee with dual 50 caliber machine guns through traffic.
 3. we see ourselves really telling off our parents, that clerk, that elder. We see others admiring how we tore them apart.
 4. we see ourselves winning the lottery... or we just dream of what we could be if only (health, money, mate).
 5. We fill our heads and hearts with the noise of politics, the anger of the online world, the fake world of social media. When God tries to get in, He finds the room is already booked... and surrounded by noises, internal and external.
- B.** This provides the devil a place to work (for he hates scrutiny and light). Meditation is something intentional. It won't happen accidentally. Because it requires planning and effort, the devil knows we are unlikely to meditate as we ought.

III. Meditation and Study

- A.** Meditation is closely linked to study, for there has to be a focus, an intention to lock in and learn. And that study needs to be systematic (**James 1:19-25**).
- B.** This is a narrative, a history of God reaching out to us to form a people dedicated to him, adopted into His family, and taking on the mission and manner of Jesus, His Son.
1. Take a moment before reading it to consider it, to ask for the Spirit's help.
 2. "May God add His blessings to the reading of His Holy Word."
 3. prayer first, then reading, then prayer.
- C.** Don't read a chapter a day, or five chapters a day. Read for one thought or one story or one lesson a day. Then take that with you along the way. (**Deuteronomy 6:4-9**)
- D.** There must be study and memorization before there can be meditation (general rule, however some meditation can be on God's working in your life). **Colossians 3:16**.

IV. How To ...

- A.** Pray, read, and then picture. Ask questions (why, what, when, where, who, what happens next).
- B.** Ask why God decided to have this delivered to us.
- C.** An illustration: the Gadarene demoniac (Mark 5:1-20)
 - 1. put yourself in the boat as it pulls up. What is Jesus' face like? Why would he choose to land the boat right in the devil's lap?
 - 2. remember back to the storm in chapter four – was the devil trying to stop Jesus? What might the storms in our lives be?
 - 3. a sign that the devil was present in that man's life was lack of control. How about our lack of control? Are there corners in our lives where the devil lurks and wages power moves against us?
 - 4. when Jesus sent the pigs over the edge, what did he look like? When we bring Him in for one thing, will He also do more?
 - 5. why did Jesus refuse to let the man join his disciples afterwards? (Does Jesus Care?)
 - 6. what does it mean, today, right now, that that same Jesus is in your heart and life?
- D.** Keep imagining. The throne scene in Isaiah 6, the scene of dry bones coming to life, the isolation of Daniel...Just imagine the power of imagining the power! Get it in you, bit by bit. Day by day. Song by song. (some say I bring a different perspective to stories they have known all their lives. Not really. I just got in the boat and paid attention)
- E.** This same Jesus landed His boat right in front of you. He tells you to lay down the nets that are keeping you too busy to think, and to come to Him. Climb on board and sail with Him.

Admonition:

Go with God.

See Him in the movement and rush of your lives.

See Him in the quiet, still moments.

See Him in the swirl of butterflies' wings.
See Him in the rush of cloud and storm.
Go with God.

See Him in the numbers in your bank account.
See Him in the plenty in your homes.
See Him in the times of need and want.
See Him walk beside you, within you, and in front of you.

Go with God
Fill up your imaginations with Him.
Fill up your days with His Word.
Fill up your days with our songs to Him.
Fill yourself with the Christ, the Father, and the Holy Spirit of God.
And above all...

Go with God.
(PM – 2003)