

BIBLICAL MEDITATION



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INTRODUCTION TO BIBLICAL MEDITATION

We live in a microwave generation. People are impatient. Everyone wants everything right now. We have high speed cameras, high speed internet, fast food, fast track traffic lanes, and we can watch current events instantaneously as they occur by satellite television broadcasting.

The question is, what are we forfeiting spiritually by our haste and impatience? For Esau, it was his birthright (Genesis 25:29-34). For King Saul, it was his kingdom (1 Samuel 13). Many believers who are caught up in the flurry of this “microwave” generation are forfeiting great spiritual benefits. One of these is the blessing of Biblical meditation.

A.W. Tozer notes:

“A generation of Christians reared among push buttons and automatic machines is impatient of slower and less direct methods of reaching their goals. We have been trying to apply machine-age methods to our relations with God. We read our chapter, have our short devotions, and rush away, hoping to make up for our deep inward bankruptcy by attending another gospel meeting or listening to another thrilling story told by a religious adventurer lately returned from afar.

The tragic results of this spirit are all about us: Shallow lives, hollow religious philosophies, the preponderance of the element of fun in gospel meetings, the glorification of men, trust in religious externalities, quasi-religious fellowships, salesmanship methods, the mistaking of dynamic personality for the power of the Spirit... We don't need to have our doctrine straightened out; we're as orthodox as the Pharisees of old. But this longing for God that brings spiritual torrents and whirlwinds of seeking...this is almost gone from our midst.”

This study presents Biblical meditation as a spiritual discipline that is essential for Christians. It exposes the dangers of meditation diversions and defines Biblical meditation, its purposes, and its importance. The study includes practical suggestions for making time to meditate, preparing for meditation, and eliminating hindrances. Guidelines are given on meditation methods and selecting Scriptural topics for meditation. Each chapter includes study questions and practical steps for personal application.

The purpose of this study is not to generate an intellectual discussion of meditation. Its objective is to lead you into a discipline that will totally revolutionize your spiritual life—the practice of Biblical meditation.

OBJECTIVES

Upon conclusion of this study you will be able to:

- Identify unscriptural methods of meditation.
- Summarize the dangers of unscriptural methods of meditation.
- Define Biblical meditation.
- List purposes for Biblical meditation.
- Give Biblical examples of people who meditated.
- Explain the importance of meditation.
- Summarize suggestions for making meditation part of your daily routine.
- Explain the difference between occasional and deliberate meditation.
- Identify times when meditation would be especially important.
- Explain the importance of having a regular time for meditation.
- Summarize guidelines for selecting a season for meditation
- Explain the importance of seclusion during meditation.
- Summarize ideas for establishing surroundings conducive to meditation.
- Summarize guidelines for maintaining silence during meditation.
- List basic supplies needed for meditation.
- Discuss hindrances to meditation and strategies to overcome them.
- Summarize methods of meditation.
- Identify topics for meditation.

Personal objectives:

- Abandon unscriptural meditation methods.
- Prepare for personal meditation.
- Eliminate hindrances to meditation.
- Select relevant topics for meditation.
- Complete practice meditations on a verse, a passage, and a topic.
- Make meditation a regular part of your time with God.
- Share what you have learned with others.

CHAPTER ONE

EXPOSING MEDITATION DIVERSIONS

OBJECTIVES:

Upon completion of this chapter you will be able to:

- Define and summarize the Scriptural position on mantra meditation.
- Define and summarize the Scriptural position on transcendental meditation.
- Define and summarize the Scriptural position on mindfulness meditation.
- Define and summarize the Scriptural position on spiritual meditation.
- Define and summarize the Scriptural position on New Age meditation.
- Define and summarize the Scriptural position on focused meditation.
- Define and summarize the Scriptural position on movement meditation.
- Explain the spiritual dangers of these diverse forms of meditation.

INTRODUCTION

Sadly, when one speaks of meditation today, they are often referring to non-scriptural methods. Before we explore the subject of Biblical meditation, we need to dispel the deceptive forms of meditation advocated by our culture today. The concept of meditation has been corrupted by belief systems that do not acknowledge the Trinity of God or the precepts of the Bible. These deceptive forms of meditation are seducing spirits about which the Bible warns:

Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils. (1 Timothy 4:1)

Christians must avoid all forms of meditation that divert them from that originally designed and commanded by God which we are calling “Biblical meditation” in this study.

METHODS TO AVOID

Christians should not engage in the following types of meditation:

-Mantra meditation, prominent in Hindu and Buddhist religions, uses repetitive words, phrases, or sounds that claim to promote ultimate relaxation and alleviate stress. The Bible warns against vain repetitions (Matthew 6:7). Biblical meditation is not a practice of speaking, but rather of hearing from God.

-Transcendental meditation encourages one to empty their mind.

David. W. Saxton notes:

“Sadly, in recent years many associate meditation with false religion of the Far East. They view meditation as a process of emptying the mind rather than, as Scripture commands, filling the mind with divinely revealed truth.”

Transcendental meditation also uses mantras, but the mantra is original and unique to each practitioner rather than a common one. Again, this is vain repetition against which the Bible warns (Matthew 6:7).

-Mindfulness meditation originates from Buddhist teachings. The focus is on your own thoughts as they pass through your mind, but the Bible teaches that your thoughts are not God’s thoughts:

For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts. (Isaiah 55:8)

Your thoughts come from your heart and the Bible reveals that *“The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?” (Jeremiah 17:9)*. When each person does what he thinks in his own heart, this leads to an environment like that in the time of the judges where everyone did what was right in his own eyes (Judges 21:25).

In Biblical meditation the believer fills his mind with thoughts about God, His Word, and His works.

-Spiritual meditation is a term used in Eastern religions, such as Hinduism and Daoism. The focus is on silence and seeking a connection with any god or the universe in general. The Bible declares there is only one God and we are to worship Him:

And God spake all these words, saying, I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have no other gods before me. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth...(Exodus 20:1-4)

-New Age meditation seeks to change a person's perceptions of self and the world in order to support the New Age philosophy and goals. The object is self, whereas in Biblical meditation the object is God. New Age meditation promotes altered states of consciousness, development of psychic powers, and spirit possession. These are all practices of the occult against which the Bible warns:

There shall not be found among you any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or that useth divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch, Or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer. For all that do these things are an abomination unto the Lord: and because of these abominations the Lord thy God doth drive them out from before thee.
(Deuteronomy 18:10-12)

-Focused meditation involves concentration using any of the five senses. Examples include focusing on your breathing patterns, counting beads, staring at a candle flame, etc. The focus of Biblical meditation is the Trinity of God, His works, and His Word.

-Movement meditation is an active form of meditation involving bodily movement. Yoga is perhaps the best known form of this meditation. Many Christians who do not understand the history behind yoga think it is simply a means of physical exercise, strengthening and improving flexibility of the muscles, and relaxing. Yoga, however, is an ancient practice which is derived from India and is believed to be the path to spiritual growth and enlightenment. Many believers engage in it without understanding of the subtle underlying meanings.

The word *yoga* means "union" or "yoking". The goal is to unite one's self with the infinite Brahman, the Hindu concept of "god" which is an impersonal spiritual substance that is one with nature and the cosmos. This is also called "pantheism," the belief that everything is God and that reality consists only of the universe and nature. The yoga philosophy makes no distinction between man and God.

The various positions in yoga have spiritual meanings related to Hindu gods. Hinduism teaches that this world is nothing more than an illusion. In Hindu and Buddhist writings, yoga is described as a way of escaping the endless cycle of reincarnation and the laws of karma. The physical exercises and positions, along with the breathing techniques, were originally developed for spiritual and religious reasons. Examples are the poses of the cobra, greeting the sun, and the mountain all of which are positions designed to welcome Hindu gods.

SPIRITUAL DANGERS

These forms of meditation are dangerous spiritually because:

-They appeal to the same desire that prompted the first sin of mankind—man being in control, “You shall be as gods”:

Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a

tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat. (Genesis 3:1-6)

-They advocate focusing on self instead of focusing on the Trinity of God, His works, and His Word. They emphasize centering yourself, concentrating on your inner self and bodily functions like breathing, emotions, etc. Biblical meditation is God-centered rather than self-centered. The Bible reveals that there is no good thing in mankind:

For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. (Romans 7:18-19)

-These methods advocate emptying the mind, which is dangerous because it gives Satanic forces an opportunity to enter:

When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest; and finding none, he saith, I will return unto my house whence I came out. And when he cometh, he findeth it swept and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh to him seven other spirits more wicked than himself; and they enter in, and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first. (Luke 11:24-26)

In Biblical meditation, one is to be filled with:

-The Holy Spirit: *“And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit...” (Ephesians 5:18).*

-The fulness of God: *“And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God” (Ephesians 3:19).*

-The fruits of righteousness: *“Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God” (Philippians 1:11).*

-Joy: *“Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost” (Romans 15:13).*

-The knowledge of God’s will: *“For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding” (Colossians 1:9).*

-All goodness and knowledge: *“And I myself also am persuaded of you, my brethren, that ye also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another” (Romans 15:14).*

-Deceptive meditation methods result in risks to physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual health. There have been documented cases of people losing bodily awareness, having terrible visions, and experiencing uncontrollable emotions and terror while using some of these methods.

-Some of these methods are an attempt to combine Christianity with other religiously-based rituals, a practice which is forbidden by God:

When the Lord your God cuts off from before you the nations which you go to dispossess, and you displace them and dwell in their land, take heed to yourself that you are not ensnared to follow them, after they are destroyed from before you, and that you do not inquire after their gods, saying, 'How did these nations serve their gods? I also will do likewise.' You shall not worship the Lord your God in that way; for every abomination to the Lord which He hates they have done to their gods; for they burn even their sons and daughters in the fire to their gods. Whatever I command you, be careful to observe it; you shall not add to it nor take away from it. (Deuteronomy 12:29-32, NKJV)

An example of this is combining Christianity with Yoga calling it “Christian Yoga”. The two words “Christianity” and “Yoga” do not belong in the same sentence. This is an attempt to combine a heathen practice with Christianity.

-Unbiblical meditation methods encourage you to focus on your thoughts. Look at the results of this in the examples of the fool, the Pharisee, and the farmer:

*The fool hath **said in his heart**, There is no God... (Psalm 14:1)*

*The Pharisee stood and **prayed thus with himself**, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess. And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted. (Luke 18:11-14)*

*And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully: And **he thought within himself**, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits? And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided? So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God. (Luke 12:16-21)*

Note the different results when thoughts are centered on God:

*When I worried about many things, your assuring words soothed my soul.
(Psalm 94:19, GWT)*

Trust in the Lord, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed. Delight thyself also in the Lord; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart.

Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass. And he shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday. (Psalm 37:3-6)

Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths. Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the Lord, and depart from evil. It shall be health to thy navel, and marrow to thy bones. (Proverbs 3:5-8)

Commit thy works unto the Lord, and thy thoughts shall be established. (Proverbs 16:3)

A NEW BEGINNING

If you have been engaging in any of these deceptive methods of meditation, stop! Pray and ask God to forgive you:

If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us. (1 John 1:8-10)

Now you are ready for a new beginning as you learn how to meditate the way God intended. You are prepared for an exciting new spiritual adventure as you explore the subject of Biblical meditation.

CHAPTER ONE TEST

Using the subheading “Methods To Avoid”, answer the following questions.

1. Define mantra meditation. Summarize the Scriptural position on this form of meditation.
2. Define transcendental meditation. Summarize the Scriptural position on this form of meditation.
3. Define mindfulness meditation. Summarize the Scriptural position on this form of meditation.
4. Define spiritual meditation. Summarize the Scriptural position on this form of meditation.
5. Define New Age meditation. Summarize the Scriptural position on this form of meditation.
6. Define focused meditation. Summarize the Scriptural position on this form of meditation.
7. Define movement meditation.
8. What is the most common type of movement meditation and why is it wrong for a believer to engage in it?

Using the subheading “Spiritual Dangers”, complete the following:

9. To what does this type of meditation appeal?
10. On what do these types of meditation focus?
11. What do these methods advocate regarding your mind during meditation?
12. Why is it dangerous to empty the mind?
13. Using the following Scriptures, summarize what a Believer’s mind should be filled with.
 - Ephesians 5:18
 - Ephesians 3:19
 - Philippians 1:11
 - Romans 15:13
 - Colossians 1:9
 - Romans 15:14
14. What are some of the risks of these types of meditation?

15. Using Deuteronomy 12:29-32, explain why these types of meditation are wrong for a believer.
16. Summarize the wrong thoughts of the fool (Psalm 14:1); the Pharisee (Luke 18:11-14); and the farmer (Luke 12:16-21).
17. Use the following Scriptures to summarize the results of having your mind filled with thoughts about God and His Word.
 - Psalm 94:19
 - Psalm 37:3-6
 - Proverbs 3:5-8
 - Proverbs 16:3

CHAPTER TWO

DEFINING BIBLICAL MEDITATION

OBJECTIVES:

Upon completion of this chapter you will be able to:

- Define Biblical meditation.
- Explain what Biblical meditation involves.
- Summarize selected quotes on meditation.
- List three main purposes of meditation.

INTRODUCTION

Selwyn Huges notes:

“For some reason, Bible meditation has become a lost art in our day. A survey conducted among Christians in the United States showed that only one in ten thousand knew how to meditate on the Scriptures. What, then, is the art of Scripture meditation? Is it reading parts of the Bible as slowly as possible so that every word sinks in? No. Is it studying a passage with the aid of a commentary so that one understands exactly what the Scripture is saying? No. Is it memorizing certain texts and recalling them to mind whenever one has a spare moment? No. You can do all of these things and still not know how to meditate.”

BIBLICAL MEDITATION

So what is Biblical meditation? One Hebrew word for “meditate” is “*hagah*” which means to speak, utter, study, rehearse, and muse over something internally. A second Hebrew term is “*siyach*” which is translated “meditation” which can be either internal musings or spoken aloud.

Both terms mean to ponder something until barriers to understanding have been eliminated and to return repeatedly to a subject to carefully consider it. Both involve dwelling on, thinking on, remembering, and considering the truths of God’s Word.

Biblical meditation involves reading, contemplating, personalizing, visualizing, and praying God’s Word. It focuses on a word or phrase and examines it from different perspectives. It is like placing the Word under a microscope instead of viewing it through a telescope.

For the believer, meditation means having “*the word of Christ dwell in you richly*” (*Colossians 3:16*).

MEDITATION DEFINITIONS

Robert J. Morgan defines Biblical meditation as “...*the powerful practice of pondering, personalizing, and practicing Scripture.*”

Thomas Brooks states regarding meditation:

“Remember that it is not hasty reading—but serious meditation on holy and heavenly truths, which makes them prove sweet and profitable to the soul. It is not the mere touching of the flower by the bee which gathers honey, but her abiding for a time on the flower which draws out the sweet. It is not he who reads most, but he who meditates most who will prove to be the choicest, sweetest, wisest and strongest Christian.”

Meditation is reviewing God’s Word by mulling it over in your mind. You are not thinking your thoughts, but you are reflecting on God’s thoughts.

Meditation is analogous to a cow’s process of mastication which is the term for how they chew and digest their food. Cows bring up previously digested food for additional chewing of the “cud”. It is spiritual digestion.

“A Primer on Meditation”, published by the Navigators, defines meditation as...

“...pondering various thoughts by mulling them over in the mind and heart. It is the processing of mental food. We might call it ‘thought digestion’: Chewing upon a thought deliberately and thoroughly, thus providing a vital link between theory and action. What mastication is to the physical body of a cow, meditation is to your mental and spiritual life.”

Thus, meditation is not simply an academic exercise. It is meant to be transformative, meaning that it will change your life. It is not only a process of analysis, but a call to action.

Andrew Murray describes meditation as "*holding the word of God in your heart and mind until it has affected every area of your life.*"

Warren Wiersbe comments: “*The more you meditate on God’s Word, the more truth you will see in it and the more direction you will get from it. This applies to decisions about marriage, vocation, ministry, or any other area in life...The Word of God is like a deep mine, filled with precious treasures; but the believer must put forth effort to discover its riches. It takes careful reading and study, prayer, meditation, and obedience to mine the treasures of the Word of God; and the Holy Spirit of God is willing to assist us. Why are we so negligent when this great wealth lies so near at hand?*”

Henry Blackaby says that “*meditation means to think deeply and continuously about something. For a Christian, this means remaining in the presence of God and pondering each truth He reveals about Himself until it becomes real and personal in your life. This takes time.*”

Christians often rush in and out of God's presence, yet they expect to gain understanding of profound spiritual realities. Meditation is a discipline where you focus long enough for God to lead you into a deeper encounter with Him and teach you Scriptural truths at a deeper level than that of the casual reading.

Thomas Watson states that *“Meditation...is a holy exercise of the mind whereby we bring the truths of God to remembrance, and do seriously ponder upon them and apply them to ourselves.”*

J.I. Packer defines meditation as *“...the activity of calling to mind, and thinking over, and dwelling on, and applying to oneself, the various things that one knows about the works and ways and purposes and promises of God. It is an activity of holy thought, consciously performed in the presence of God, under the eye of God, by the help of God, as a means of communion with God.”* Packer explains how we can turn our knowledge **about** God into knowledge **of** God:

“How can we turn our knowledge about God into knowledge of God? The rule for doing this is simple but demanding. It is that we turn each truth that we learn about God into matter for meditation before God, leading to prayer and praise to God. Its purpose is to clear one’s mental and spiritual vision of God, and to let his truth make its full and proper impact on one’s mind and heart. It is a matter of talking to oneself about God and oneself; it is, indeed, often a matter of arguing with oneself, reasoning oneself out of moods of doubt and unbelief into a clear apprehension of God’s power and grace.”

According to Packer, meditation is not giving free rein to your imagination, nor is it reading your Bible for beautiful thoughts. Meditation is a discipline.

Don Whitney defines meditation as *“deep thinking on the truths and spiritual realities revealed in Scripture for the purposes of understanding, application, and prayer”*. He compares meditation to hot water and a tea bag: *“Hearing God’s Word is like one dip of the tea bag into the cup. Some of the tea’s flavor is absorbed by the water, but not as much as would occur with a more thorough soaking of the bag. Meditation is like immersing the bag completely and letting it steep until all the rich tea flavor has been extracted.”*

THE PURPOSES OF MEDITATION

The **first and primary purpose** of meditation is come to know God more intimately:

Thus saith the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the Lord. (Jeremiah 9:23-24)

A.W. Tozer notes:

“Theology seeks to reduce what may be known of God to intellectual terms, and as long as the intellect can comprehend, it can find words to express itself. When God Himself appears before the mind—awesome, vast, and incomprehensible—then the mind sinks into silence and the heart cries out ‘O Lord God.’ There is a difference between theological knowledge and spiritual experience, the difference between knowing God by hearsay and knowing Him by acquaintance.”

Knowledge of God, His Work, and His Word only comes through time spent in His presence:

“For it is not mere words that nourish the soul, but God Himself, and unless and until the hearers find God in personal experience they are not the better for having heard the truth. The Bible is not an end in itself, but a means to bring men to an intimate and satisfying knowledge of God, that they may enter into Him, that they may delight in His Presence, may taste and know the inner sweetness of the very God Himself in the core and center of their hearts.” (A.W. Tozer)

The Scriptures promise:

*...if you receive my words,
And treasure my commands within you,
So that you incline your ear to wisdom,
And apply your heart to understanding;
Yes, if you cry out for discernment,
And lift up your voice for understanding,
If you seek her as silver,
And search for her as for hidden treasures;
Then you will understand the fear of the Lord,
And find the knowledge of God.
For the Lord gives wisdom;
From His mouth come knowledge and understanding.
(Proverbs 2:1-6, NKJV)*

Meditation focuses your mind to gain greater understanding of the Trinity of God, the Word of God, and the works of God in order to apply this knowledge to your life.

A **second purpose** of meditation is to come to know the voice of God. As you linger in His presence and meditate on Him, His Word, and His works, you will come to know His voice just as you come to recognize the voices of good friends. The Bible verifies that believers can know the voice of God. Jesus said:

*I am the good shepherd and know my sheep, and am known of mine...
And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice, and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.*

*My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me...
(John 10:14,16,27)*

To study more about this, obtain the course entitled “*Knowing God’s Voice*” available free at <http://www.harvestime.org>

A *third purpose* of meditation is to ponder your own spiritual condition in order to deal with personal sin, understand your strengths and weaknesses, and confront issues in your life on a Scriptural basis.

THE POWER OF BIBLICAL MEDITATION

The biography of Geoffery Bull, a British missionary to Tibet who was captured and imprisoned by Chinese Communists, is a tremendous illustration of the power of meditation. His captors took all of his possessions, placed him in prison, took away his Bible, and made him suffer terribly at their hands for three years. He endured extreme temperatures, physical abuse, starvation, and such intense mental and psychological torture that he feared he would go insane.

Missionary Bull had no Bible. but he had studied and meditated on the Bible all his life. So he began to systematically go over the Scriptures in his mind. He started at Genesis, and recalled each incident as best he could, first concentrating on the content, then musing on certain points, and seeking revelation through prayer. He continued through the Old Testament and then went on through the New Testament. Then he started over again. He later wrote, “*The strength received through this meditation was, I believe, a vital factor in bringing me through, kept by the faith to the very end.*”

CHAPTER TWO TEST

1. Define Biblical meditation.
2. What does Biblical meditation involve?
3. Summarize the quotes on meditation from:
 - Selwyn Huges
 - Robert Morgan
 - Thomas Brooks
 - A Primer On Meditation
 - Andrew Murray
 - Warren Wiersbe
 - Henry Blackaby
 - Thomas Watson
 - J.I. Packer
 - Don Whitney
 - A.W. Tozer
4. What are three main purposes of meditation?
5. What does Proverbs 2:1-6 promise regarding meditation?
6. What did Missionary Geoffery Bull say regarding the power of meditation during his incarceration?

CHAPTER THREE

RECOGNIZING THE IMPORTANCE OF MEDITATION

OBJECTIVES:

Upon completion of this chapter you will be able to:

- Give some Biblical examples of people who meditated.
- Explain the importance of Biblical meditation.

INTRODUCTION

Why should a believer meditate? Is it an essential part of Christian disciplines? This chapter answers these questions as it explores the importance of Biblical meditation.

BIBLICAL MEDITATION IS IMPORTANT

Believers should meditate because:

Meditation is Scriptural.

-Adam and Eve walked and talked with God in unbroken fellowship, communion, and meditation prior to their fall into sin (Genesis 3:8).

-Isaac was meditating out in the fields when he first met his bride (Genesis 24:63). There was no written Word of God at that time, so he most likely was meditating on what he knew about God and what he could learn about Him from observing creation.

-David is one of the greatest examples of meditation, repeatedly writing in the Psalms about the importance of meditating on God and His Word. Psalm 119 is a great example. David experienced extreme hardships including losing a child and a best friend and Saul's attempts to kill him, yet as Dr. Charles Stanley notes:

“Why was David able to trust in the Lord? Because he knew how to meditate. That is, he focused his mind and spirit on God’s character, ways, and will in order to know the Lord better and obey him...Continually focusing on God, David found peace in the midst of turmoil.”

-Joshua was commanded to meditate on the Word day and night and was promised success for doing so. We can assume that Joshua complied, as God's promises were fulfilled and his conquest of the Promised Land was successful (Joshua 1:8).

-Jeremiah used the analogy of eating God's Word to describe meditation (Jeremiah 15:16).

-Mary pondered in her heart all the things that she was told by the angel and all she observed about the Christ-child (Luke 2;19).

-The Ethiopian Eunuch was pondering a passage in Isaiah when Philip joined him and explained it, resulting in the man's salvation (Acts 8:27-35).

-The Bereans did not just read and listen to the Word of God, they searched it diligently-
-implying contemplation through meditation (Acts 17:11).

-Jesus is our supreme example of meditation. Despite His busy ministry schedule, He often retreated to the mountains, the wilderness, or the seashore to be alone with the Father, to pray, and meditate (Matthew 14:23; Mark 1:35; Luke 6:12).

Meditation is commanded.

Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all. (1 Timothy 4:15)

Note the commands and promises regarding meditation in this passage:

This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success. (Joshua 1:8)

The commands are to imbibe the Scriptures, give yourself wholly to the Word, speak it, meditate on it, and obey it. The promises for doing this are profit and success.

The Scriptures determine what is to be the content of your meditations:

Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things. (Philippians 4:8)

Meditation results in blessing, spiritual growth, stability, and fruitfulness.

Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. (Psalm 1:1-3)

Meditation results in spiritual discernment.

*I have more understanding than all my teachers: for thy testimonies are my meditation.
(Psalms 119:99)*

...the meditation of my heart shall be of understanding. (Psalm 49:3)

Meditation increases spiritual knowledge.

*My son, if you receive my words,
And treasure my commands within you,
So that you incline your ear to wisdom,
And apply your heart to understanding;
Yes, if you cry out for discernment,
And lift up your voice for understanding,
If you seek her as silver,
And search for her as for hidden treasures;
Then you will understand the fear of the Lord,
And find the knowledge of God. (Proverbs 2:1-5)*

Meditation builds confidence and faith.

I have set the Lord always before me: because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved. (Psalm 16:8)

Meditation results in Godly wisdom.

There are two kinds of wisdom, heavenly wisdom and earthly wisdom (James 3:14-17). By looking intently into God's Word through meditation, you receive heavenly wisdom:

Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like a man who looks at his face in a mirror and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. But the man who looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues to do this, not forgetting what he has heard, but doing it — he will be blessed in what he does. (James 1:22-25, NIV):

The same word for “intently” in this passage is used in Luke 24:12 when the disciples gazed into the empty tomb. When you take a good long look at the Word—you gaze into it, so to speak—you are meditating.

Meditation brings satisfaction.

My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness; and my mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips: When I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee in the night watches. (Psalm 63:5-6)

Meditation fosters obedience.

Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee. (Psalm 119:11)

*I have remembered thy name, O Lord, in the night, and have kept thy law.
(Psalm 119:55)*

*This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.
(Joshua 1:8)*

Meditation brings comfort, joy, gladness, and delight.

In the multitude of my thoughts within me thy comforts delight my soul. (Psalm 94:19)

Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. (Psalm 1:1-2)

I will meditate in thy precepts, and have respect unto thy ways. I will delight myself in thy statutes: I will not forget thy word. (Psalm 119:15-16)

Thy testimonies also are my delight and my counsellors. (Psalm 119:24)

My meditation of him shall be sweet: I will be glad in the Lord. (Psalm 104:34)

Meditation changes your perspective.

Instead of focusing on temporal circumstances, your focus is on eternal matters and this alters your perspective about the difficulties of life:

For all things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God. For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal. (2 Corinthians 4:15-18)

Meditation results in provision.

When you seek the Lord and His Kingdom first, then all else you need will be provided.

But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. (Matthew 6:33).

Meditation gives peace.

Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee. (Isaiah 26:3)

Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things. Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you. (Philippians 4:8-9)

Meditation gives strength.

Wait on the Lord: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait. (Psalm 27:14)

But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint. (Isaiah 40:32)

Meditation fosters hope.

My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my expectation is from him. (Psalm 62:5)

Meditation results in experiencing God's goodness.

The Lord is good unto them that wait for him, to the soul that seeks him. It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord. (Lamentations 3:25-26)

Meditation promotes spiritual growth.

... nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained. Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all. (1 Timothy 4:6,15)

Meditation results in praise and worship.

We have thought of thy lovingkindness, O God, in the midst of thy temple. According to thy name, O God, so is thy praise unto the ends of the earth: thy right hand is full of righteousness. (Psalm 48:9-10)

My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness; and my mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips: When I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee in the night watches. (Psalm 63:5-6)

I will sing unto the Lord as long as I live: I will sing praise to my God while I have my being. My meditation of him shall be sweet: I will be glad in the Lord. (Psalm 104:33-34)

Meditation results in success.

This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success. (Joshua 1:8)

Meditation addresses spiritual, physical, and emotional needs.

Dr. Charles Stanley explains that...

“We can be tired, weary, and emotionally distraught, but after spending time alone with God, we find that He injects into our bodies energy, power, and strength. God’s spiritual dynamics are at work in our inner beings, refreshing and energizing our minds and spirits. There is nothing to match meditation in its impact upon our lives...”

Often, people turn to entertainment, sports, alcohol, drugs, hobbies, compulsive shopping, and worldly music trying to meet their needs. They should turn to the Bible instead, for the Word has an answer for every situation: Anxiety, worry, assurance, confusion, values, grief, etc.—too many topics to list here. Use the Harvestime Biblical Counseling Database for topical verses addressing various life issues and related Scriptures upon which you can meditate:
<http://www.biblicalcounselingdatabase.net>

Meditation is important for healing and health.

Medical science has recognized the health benefits of meditation. The Bible confirms that meditating on God’s Word brings life, healing, and health:

My son, attend to my words; consent and submit to my sayings. Let them not depart from your sight; keep them in the center of your heart. For they are life to those who find them, healing and health to all their flesh. (Proverbs 4:20-22, TAB)

Meditation results in intimacy with God.

When you draw near to God in meditation, He draws near to you (James 4:8).

*Then those who feared the Lord spoke to one another,
And the Lord listened and heard them;*

*So a book of remembrance was written before Him
For those who fear the Lord
And who meditate on His name. (Malachi 3:16, NKJV)*

Meditation changes you into the image of God.

Mankind was originally created in the image of God, but that image was marred through sin (Genesis 1:26). As you meditate on the Lord and spend time in His presence, you are progressively transformed into His image again:

*Now all of us, with our faces unveiled, reflect the glory of the Lord as if we are mirrors; and so we are being transformed, metamorphosed, into His same image from one radiance of glory to another, just as the Spirit of the Lord accomplishes.
(2 Corinthians 3:18, VOICE)*

Meditation helps you overcome temptation.

Robert Morgan explains how meditation on Scriptures helps you overcome temptation:

“This is a verse that I’ve used literally hundreds and hundreds of times in my life: ‘Whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things.’ (Philippians 4:8). When I’m tempted it’s my favorite verse to use to turn my thoughts from what’s wrong to what’s right, so I’ve memorized it very well, because I have been tempted a lot. If you’ll take a verse like this and let it turn your mind from what’s wrong to what’s right, you’ll find the temptation starts to drop away.”

Dr. David Jeremiah comments:

“The key to dealing with temptation is to fill our minds with other things. Since temptation begins with our thoughts, changing what we think about is the key to victory.”

Meditation results in effective ministry.

Jeremiah warned of those who erroneously claimed to be declaring God’s counsel to others:

*Thus saith the Lord of hosts, Hearken not unto the words of the prophets that prophesy unto you: they make you vain: they speak a vision of their own heart, and not out of the mouth of the Lord. They say still unto them that despise me, The Lord hath said, Ye shall have peace; and they say unto every one that walketh after the imagination of his own heart, No evil shall come upon you. For who hath stood in the counsel of the Lord, and hath perceived and heard his word? who hath marked his word, and heard it?
(Jeremiah 23:16-18)*

Their error resulted because they did not spend time in the presence of the Lord receiving His counsel:

I have not sent these prophets, yet they ran: I have not spoken to them, yet they prophesied. But if they had stood in my counsel, and had caused my people to hear my words, then they should have turned them from their evil way, and from the evil of their doings. (Jeremiah 23:21-22)

When you spend time in meditation, you will receive a word from God to share with others and you will become a spokesperson for Him.

The psalmist expressed it this way:

*My heart was hot within me;
While I was musing (meditating), the fire burned.
Then I spoke with my tongue. (Psalm 39:3, NKJV)*

Robert Morris notes that “*Our pressures drive us to His principles. His principles lead us to His person. By meditation on His principles and person, we persevere through our struggles and arrive at praise. Then we have a message to preach to others.*”

Meditation transforms your mind.

Paul warned the Corinthians not to be ignorant of Satan’s “wiles.” The Greek word for “wiles” means “schemes” and is from the same word used for “mind.” Satan’s primary assaults occur in your thought life. Your mind is the main battlefield of spiritual warfare.

One of the reasons Satan battles for your mind is that part of the greatest commandment is to love God with all your mind:

*Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind; This is the first and great commandment.
(Matthew 22:37-38)*

Satan battles for the mind because the way you think affects the way you act:

For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he...(Proverbs 23:7)

Satan knows that if he can control your mind, he can control your body, your actions and--if left unchallenged--your spirit.

This is why meditation is so important. Through Biblical meditation, your mind can be changed from carnal to spiritual:

For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually

mind is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. (Romans 8:5-7)

As you meditate on God and His Word, your mind will be supernaturally transformed:

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God. (Romans 12:1-2)

Biblical meditation eliminates the thinking of the world and helps you think as God does:

For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts. For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it. For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree: and it shall be to the Lord for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off. (Isaiah 55:8-13)

This passage confirms that when you think God's thoughts you will have divine provision (verse 10); joy (verse 12); peace (verse 12); and be productive spiritually (verse 13).

CHAPTER THREE TEST

1. Give some Biblical examples of people who meditated.
2. Using the following statements, explain the importance of Biblical meditation:
 - Meditation is Scriptural.
 - Meditation is commanded.
 - Meditation results in blessing, spiritual growth, stability, and fruitfulness.
 - Meditation results in spiritual discernment.
 - Meditation increases spiritual knowledge.
 - Meditation builds confidence and faith.
 - Meditation results in Godly wisdom
 - Meditation brings satisfaction.
 - Meditation fosters obedience.
 - Meditation brings comfort, joy, gladness, and delight.
 - Meditation changes your perspective.
 - Meditation results in provision.
 - Meditation gives peace.
 - Meditation gives strength.
 - Meditation fosters hope.
 - Meditation results in experiencing God's goodness.
 - Meditation promotes spiritual growth.
 - Meditation results in praise and worship.
 - Meditation results in success.
 - Meditation addresses spiritual, physical, and emotional needs.
 - Meditation is important for healing and health.
 - Meditation results in intimacy with God.
 - Meditation changes you into the image of God.
 - Meditation helps you overcome temptation.
 - Meditation results in effective ministry. Summarize the quote by Robert Morris regarding the spiritual cycle which results in having a message to preach to others.
 - Meditation transforms your mind.

CHAPTER FOUR

MAKING TIME TO MEDITATE

OBJECTIVES:

Upon completion of this chapter you will be able to:

- Summarize suggestions for making meditation part of your daily routine.
- Summarize Harriett Tubman's strategies for meditation.
- Summarize Brother Lawrence's suggestions for practicing the presence of God.
- Explain the difference between occasional and deliberate meditation.
- Identify times when meditation is especially important.
- Explain the importance of having a regular time for meditation.

INTRODUCTION

In this busy world fueled by media and technology, you will never *find* time to meditate. You must *make* time to meditate. Despite His intense ministry schedule, Jesus frequently withdrew to the mountains, the seashore, or the desert to spend time with the Father.

A.W. Tozer notes:

"We will find that we have within us a secret garden where no one can enter except ourselves and God...Where God is not known in the inner shrine, the individual must try to compensate for his sense of aloneness in whatever way he can. Most persons rush away to the world to find companionship and surround themselves with every kind of diversionary activity. All devices of killing time, every shallow scheme for entertainment, are born out of this inner loneliness. It is a significant and revealing fact that such things have in these last days grown into billion-dollar enterprises. So much will men pay to forget that they are a temple without a God, a garden where no voice is heard in the cool of the day."

This chapter provides suggestions for making time to meditate, spending time with Him in the garden of your heart.

ROUTINE MEDITATION

Although every believer should have a specific quiet time each day in which to fellowship with the Lord, meditation can also be worked into your daily routine. Here are some suggestions:

When you wake up in the morning. Take a few minutes when you first awaken--perhaps before you even get out of bed--to meditate.

Cause me to hear thy lovingkindness in the morning; for in thee do I trust: cause me to know the way wherein I should walk; for I lift up my soul unto thee. (Psalm 143:8)

During your commute. Meditate during your commute whether you travel for work, errands, or pleasure by private vehicle or public transportation. Earphones and media with soft Christian music are helpful to drown out competing noise.

When you walk. Whether you are taking a walk for pleasure, exercise, or to a specific destination, meditate as you walk. Earphones and media with soft Christian music are helpful to eliminate street noise. God communed with Adam and Eve prior to the fall as they walked in the garden (Genesis 3:8). Enoch walked with God regularly and one day he walked right into eternity (Genesis 5:22-24). Isaac meditated as he walked in the fields (Genesis 24:63).

When you exercise. When you exercise your physical body by lifting weights, walking, running, swimming, or riding a bicycle, exercise spiritually by meditating on the Lord.

When you awaken at night. Insomnia is a perfect time to meditate on the Lord.

*My eyes are awake through the night watches,
That I may meditate on Your word. (Psalm 119:148, NKJV)*

Meditate within your heart on your bed, and be still. (Psalm 4:4, NKJV)

*I call to remembrance my song in the night;
I meditate within my heart,
And my spirit makes diligent search. (Psalm 77:6, NKJV)*

My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness; and my mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips: When I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee in the night watches. (Psalm 63:5-6)

Before bedtime. Take a few minutes to meditate on the Lord, His Word, and His work through you and in you that day. God commanded Joshua: *“This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night...” (Joshua 1:8).*

Anytime and anyplace. Meditation need not be confined to a specific time in seclusion.

The psalmist declared:

*Where can I go from Your Spirit?
Or where can I flee from Your presence?
If I ascend into heaven, You are there;
If I make my bed in hell, behold, You are there.
If I take the wings of the morning,
And dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea,
Even there Your hand shall lead me,*

*And Your right hand shall hold me.
If I say, "Surely the darkness shall fall on me,"
Even the night shall be light about me... (Psalm 139:7-11, NKJV)*

The psalmist also declared: *"Oh how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day" (Psalm 119:97).*

God's presence is everywhere, so you can meditate on Him, His Works, and His Word any time and any place.

-Harriett Tubman was a Christian who rescued many people from slavery during a dark period of United States' history. She explained how she continually meditated and prayed as she went about her daily tasks. *"...When I washed my face, I said 'Oh Lord, wash me and make me clean'. When I took the towel to wipe my face, I cried 'Oh Lord, wipe away my sins.' When I took the broom to sweep, I prayed 'Oh Lord whatsoever sin there be in my heart, sweep it out...'"*

-Brother Lawrence, another great hero of the Christian faith, wrote *"Practicing the Presence of God."* Brother Lawrence was a 17th century Carmelite monk in France who was assigned to kitchen duty in the monastery where he spent his days preparing and cooking food and cleaning up afterwards. While performing these menial duties, Brother Lawrence began to have ongoing conversations with God as he did his chores. His classic book explains how to continually incorporate prayer and meditation into everyday life.

"Brother Lawrence retreated to a place in his heart where the love of God made every detail of his life of surpassing value...Together, God and Brother Lawrence cooked meals, ran errands, scrubbed pots, and endured the scorn of the world."
(Christianity Today International)

His objective was to keep a constant connection with God throughout the whole day, regardless of the circumstances:

"Lawrence encourages the people of God to sustain—livingly intentionally and without ceasing—an attentiveness to God's close presence. The believer understands that in this presence, and ultimately nowhere else, is fullness of joy; at God's right hand are the deepest and most enduring pleasures of all." (Dictionary of Christian Spirituality)

As A.W. Tozer notes:

"When the habit of inwardly gazing Godward becomes fixed with us, we shall be ushered onto a new level of spiritual life...the Triune God will be our dwelling place even while our feet walk the low road of simple duty here among men."

The Puritans practiced what they called occasional meditation and deliberate meditation. **Occasional meditation** was spontaneously done as one went through their day—like that

described by Harriet Tubman and Brother Lawrence. It used common events of life to consider spiritual truths, drawing spiritual parallels from natural examples. *Deliberate meditation* referred to setting aside a specific time for meditation. Both were viewed as essential disciplines.

SPECIAL TIMES

Meditation is important at special times such as the following:

- Facing an important decision: Meditate on the promises of guidance from the Lord. This may involve sustained periods of time when you are waiting for God's guidance. Twice, Moses spent forty days and nights on Mount Sinai receiving God's message (Deuteronomy 9:9,25). Jesus, spent forty days and nights in the wilderness as He prepared to commence His public ministry (Matthew 4:1-2; Luke 4:1-2). The Apostle Paul spent three years in Arabia to prepare him for his ministry (Galatians 1:15-18).
- Going through financial difficulties: Meditate on the promises of provision and Biblical guidelines for handling finances.
- Tragedies, such as the loss of a loved one, a divorce, and other great losses: Meditate on verses of comfort.
- Health crises: Meditate on promises of healing.
- Difficult emotions: Whether you are lonely, fearful, angry, sad, etc., peace results when you meditate on the Lord (Isaiah 26:3). Meditate on verses dealing with anger, bitterness, hatred, and unforgiveness.
- Temptation: Meditate on verses on how to deal with temptation.
- Death/funerals: Meditate on the brevity of life and how to prepare for eternity.
- On the Lord's Day: One day a week is to be set aside for the Lord, which provides a good time to engage in meditation.
- Preparing to minister: You cannot adequately preach or teach a passage until you have meditated on it and digested it spiritually into your own soul.
- During transitions: Times of change can be stressful—moving to a new location, leaving home to go to college, a new job, or a new church. Meditation will help you through it.
- Birth: The birth of a child is an opportunity to reflect on the sanctity of life and Biblical guidelines for raising children.
- Marriage: Contemplating marriage is one of the most important decisions of a lifetime. Meditate on Biblical guidelines for selecting a mate and maintaining a good marriage.

-Preparing to take the Lord's Supper: The Bible says to take time to examine yourself before the Lord and repent of sin as you reflect on Christ's sacrifice.

REGULAR TIMES

Every believer should set aside a daily time for prayer, worship, study of the Word, and meditation. If you do not schedule a set time for something, you usually don't get around to doing it. The guidelines in the next chapter will help you prepare for a specific time of meditation.

CHAPTER FOUR TEST

1. Summarize suggestions for making meditation part of your daily routine.
2. Summarize Harriett Tubman's strategies for meditation.
3. Summarize Brother Lawrence's suggestions for practicing the presence of God.
4. Explain the difference between occasional and deliberate meditation.
5. List some times when meditation is especially important.
6. Explain the importance of having a regular time for meditation.
7. Using the models of Ms. Tubman and Brother Lawrence, make a list of routine tasks you do each day where you can incorporate Biblical meditation as you work.

CHAPTER FIVE

PREPARING FOR MEDITATION

OBJECTIVES:

Upon completion of this chapter you will be able to:

- Summarize guidelines for selecting a season for meditation
- Explain the importance of seclusion during meditation.
- Summarize ideas for establishing surroundings conducive to meditation.
- Summarize guidelines for maintaining silence during meditation.
- List basic supplies needed for meditation.

INTRODUCTION

As detailed in the last chapter, you can meditate any time and any place but you also should have a specific time each day to get alone with God for worship, prayer, the Word, and meditation. If you make deliberate preparations for a set time, you will be more likely to keep your regular appointment with God.

MEDITATION PREPARATIONS

-Season. Set aside a specific time each day for meditation. Select a time where you are mentally alert. For some, this may be early morning. For others, it may be in the evening--which is actually the beginning of the day to God: *“And the evening and the morning were the day”* (Genesis 1). Start with a few minutes a day and then progress to longer periods as you learn the techniques of Biblical meditation.

-Seclusion. Find a quiet place where you can be alone. Thomas Watson explains:

“A Christian, when he goes to meditate, must lock up himself from the world. The world spoils meditation; Christ went by Himself into the mountainside to pray...Go into a solitary place when you are to meditate. Isaac went out to meditate in the field. He sequestered and retired himself that he might take a walk with God by meditation... When Abraham went to sacrifice, he left his servant and the donkey at the bottom of the hill. So, when a Christian is going up the hill of meditation, he should leave all secular cares at the bottom of the hill, that he may be alone.”

A.W. Tozer suggests:

“Retire from the world each day to some private spot...stay in the secret place till the surrounding noises begin to fade out of your heart and a sense of God’s presence envelops you.”

Dr. Charles Stanley notes:

“You and I are blessed and cursed with constant communication through our phones, tablets, and computers. But true communion with the Lord demands some seclusion. So let’s turn off the TV, music, and phone notifications and listen for God’s voice. Claim a block of time for the Heavenly Father today, even if you start with only five minutes.”

-Surroundings. Orchestrate surroundings conducive to meditation. Here are some options to consider:

-Establish a relaxing environment: A fireplace, a warm blanket, a comfortable chair, or a beautiful location outside in God’s creation.

-Use soft Christian music to eliminate environmental distractions.

-Use incense. In the Old Testament (Exodus 30:7-8), incense was burned morning and evening before God. It was also used in the New Testament (Luke 1:10).

-Incense is symbolic of your prayers ascending to God:

And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God... (Revelation 8:4)

-Burning incense honors the name of the Lord:

For from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same my name shall be great among the Gentiles (nations); and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering: for my name shall be great among the heathen, saith the Lord of hosts. (Malachi 1:11)

-A prayer to pray when burning incense to the Lord:

Lord, I cry unto thee: make haste unto me; give ear unto my voice, when I cry unto thee. Let my prayer be set forth before thee as incense; and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice. (Psalm 141:1-2)

-Use candles. Meditate on the following verses:

-For thou wilt light my candle: the Lord my God will enlighten my darkness. (Psalm 18:28)

-Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven. (Matthew 5:15-16)

*- If thy whole body therefore be full of light, having no part dark, the whole shall be full of light, as when the bright shining of a candle doth give thee light.
(Luke 11:36)*

-Our God is a consuming fire...(Hebrews 12:29)

-Silence. Silence your phone, the television, and other distractions. As Frances Roberts stated:
“Silence will speak more to you in a day than the world of voices can teach you in a lifetime.”

A.W. Tozer advises:

“Deliberately tune out the unpleasant sounds and come out of your closet determined not to hear them. Listen for the inward voice till you learn to recognize it...Call home your thoughts. Gaze on Christ with the eyes of your soul. Practice spiritual concentration.”

-Supplies. You will need the following basic supplies:

-A journal to record your meditations.

-Pens or pencils.

-Your Bible.

-Different versions of the Bible. If you have access to these, they are a great aid in meditation as they emphasize different thoughts and words. If you have access to the Internet, many versions are free online.

CHAPTER FIVE TEST

1. Summarize guidelines for selecting a season for meditation
2. Explain the importance of seclusion during meditation. Use the quotes by Thomas Watson, A.W. Tozer, and Charles Stanley.
3. Summarize ideas for establishing surroundings conducive to meditation.
4. How can you assure silence during meditation? Summarize the quotes by Frances Roberts and A.W. Tozer as part of your answer
5. What basic supplies are needed for meditation?
6. Application:
 - Season: What time have you selected for meditation?
 - Seclusion: Where will you meditate?
 - Surroundings. How are you preparing the surroundings where you will meditate?
 - Silence: What steps will you take to assure silence during meditation?
 - Supplies: Have you assembled the supplies you will need for meditation?

CHAPTER SIX

ELIMINATING HINDRANCES TO MEDITATION

OBJECTIVES:

Upon completion of this chapter you will be able to:

- Discuss these hindrances to meditation and give suggestions for dealing with each.
 - I have too many responsibilities.
 - I don't have time.
 - It is too difficult.
 - I don't know how.
 - My mind wanders.
 - There are too many distractions.
 - It seems legalistic.
 - I don't have a good education.
 - I don't like trying new things.
 - I am afraid I will fail.
- Identify your personal hindrances to meditation and formulate a strategy for dealing with them.

INTRODUCTION

Let's take a midpoint check here: You have studied about meditation diversions which you should avoid and you have learned the definition of Biblical meditation, its purposes, its importance, and how to make time for it. You have made preparations to start meditating. But before you begin, let's deal with some common hindrances you may encounter. If meditation is such a blessing and so important in a believer's life, then it is obvious that Satan will try to hinder it. If you are aware of the enemy's wiles, you will be prepared to combat them (Ephesians 6:11).

Here are some common hindrances and how to deal with them.

-I have too many responsibilities.

One hindrance to meditation is to view it as one more thing on your long "to do list". View meditation not as a duty, but as a privilege to come into God's presence to rest and be renewed as you think His thoughts. If you are too busy to meditate, then you are too busy. Re-examine your schedule and see what things you can eliminate or delegate to others.

Start in small increments, short periods of time. If you have children, set aside at least 15 minutes a day to start. Have the children each go to their rooms with either a Christian picture book or a book appropriate to their reading level. Call it "quiet time". This will allow you a few

minutes to meditate and you will also be programming this important discipline into their lives at an early age.

-I don't have time.

Have certain things you are doing become an idol in your life? Is time with your friends a greater priority than time with God? Are you spending an inordinate amount of time on entertainment, hobbies, sports, secular reading, or the Internet ?

Think of all the time you spend on bathing, grooming, haircuts, diet plans, exercising, wrinkle cremes, and shopping for clothes and makeup--all so you can look good outwardly. Reorder your priorities. The Bible says that despite your best efforts, your natural man is perishing (2 Corinthians 4:16). Put some of that time and effort into developing your inner man which the Bible says can be renewed daily. How about one less television show? How about turning off your media devices for a time? How about a meditative walk instead of dozing in your comfortable recliner?

You make time for the things you want to do. It is not a lack of time that prevents you from meditating, but a lack of desire. Ask God to give you the desire.

Keep in mind these words of John Maxwell as you plan your daily schedule:

"So often we think about life in terms of what's happening today, this week, or next month. We need to try to look at things as God does, with an eye for eternity. Is what you are doing now making a lasting impact? Will it matter in another year, another decade, another century?"

-It is too difficult.

Some think that meditation is too difficult. Like other disciplines of the faith such as prayer, church attendance, the Lord's Supper, and baptism, meditation is advocated by Scripture. It is not any more difficult than the other disciplines of the Christian faith. Plus, as a believer, nothing is too difficult because you are empowered to do all things through Christ (Philippians 4:13).

-I don't know how.

Use this manual on Biblical Meditation. Read it, do the questions at the end of each chapter, and follow the guidelines. It provides a simple, workable plan for meditating. You didn't know how to swim, ride a bike, or drive a car when you first started. You had to begin in order to learn. Just start.

-My mind wanders.

Keep a pad of paper handy and if your mind wanders to things you need to do, write those things down. If your mind wanders to a person or a problem, make a note to remind you to pray or

deal with the issue later. Then return to your meditation. Do not feel guilty when your thoughts wander. Simply take control of your mind and bring it back on track.

-There are too many distractions.

A simple solution: Eliminate them. Turn off your phone and the TV. Meditate in some location where you won't be distracted by the dirty dishes, clothes that need washing or folding, an unmade bed, or the floor that needs cleaning. Keep your meditation area—whether it is a chair or an entire room—clean, tidy, and free from distractions.

-It seems legalistic.

Some claim that having a set time for meditation is legalistic. This is true only if you are doing it in your own strength. As Paul details in Romans 7-8, you cannot do what you should without the power of the Holy Spirit. Meditation is no more legalistic than prayer, Bible study, or church attendance. Any of these, done as a ritual or routine, can become legalistic.

-I don't have a good education.

You don't need a college education to meditate. Follow the simple principles in this manual. If you are a poor reader, then meditation is definitely for you because instead of struggling through entire chapters and books of the Bible, you can focus on one verse or a small segment of Scripture.

-I don't like trying new things.

Really? You don't like new clothes? Trying new beauty products? New hair styles? New foods? New technology? Everyone tries new things in the natural world. Why not be open to changes in the spiritual world. God loves change and wants you to participate with Him in new things. He has declared:

Remember ye not the former things, neither consider the things of old. Behold, I will do a new thing; now it shall spring forth; shall ye not know it? I will even make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert. (Isaiah 43:18-19)

Embrace spiritual change. Just begin and He will open the way supernaturally as you progress. New spiritual paths and new depths of the rivers of God await you.

-I am afraid I will fail.

You failed at walking when you first tried it. What did you do? Sit down and quit? No, you got up and tried again...and again and again until you mastered it. When you miss a set time of meditation, your mind wanders, or other hindrances prevent your meditation, do not feel guilty, think that you have failed, or quit trying. The Bible declares: *"There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit"* (Romans 8:1). In any area of Christian discipline, ministry, or conduct whenever you

fail, ask God for help and try again. *“For a righteous man falls seven times and rises again...”* (Proverbs 24:16, TAB).

Missionary Jim Elliott, who was martyred for Christ in Ecuador, often struggled with spiritual disciplines. He recorded these challenges in his journals writing, *“My devotional reading pattern was broken. I have never restored it...Prayer as a single man was difficult...Now it is too hard to get out of bed in the morning...I’ve made resolutions on this score before now but not followed them up.”*

But Jim never gave up. He persevered in meditation and left the world with amazing insights in his journal such as this powerful quote: *“He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain that which he cannot lose.”*

CHAPTER SIX TEST

1. Discuss these hindrances to meditation and give suggestions for dealing with each.
 - I have too many responsibilities.
 - I don't have time.
 - It is too difficult.
 - I don't know how.
 - My mind wanders.
 - There are too many distractions.
 - It seems legalistic.
 - I don't have a good education.
 - I don't like trying new things.
 - I am afraid I will fail.

2. Can you think of other hindrances that you may personally encounter? How will you deal with these?

CHAPTER SEVEN

EMPLOYING METHODS OF MEDITATION

Part One

OBJECTIVES:

Upon completion of this chapter you will be able to:

- Explain why you already know how to meditate.
- Summarize the following guidelines for meditation:
 - Quieting yourself in the presence of the Lord.
 - Worshipping God.
 - Praying for the Holy Spirit's help.
 - Selecting Scriptures on which to meditate.
 - Reading the passage.
 - Meditating on each word of a passage.
 - Using questions and answers.
 - Using a journal to:
 - Outline the Scripture.
 - Summarize the basic truths of the passage.
 - Paraphrase the passage.
 - Visualize the passage.
 - Memorizing the passage.
 - Making the passage accessible.
 - Praying about the passage.
 - Worshipping God.
 - Applying the meditation to your life.

INTRODUCTION

Perhaps you are thinking, "I would like to meditate, but I really don't know how." Regarding this, Tony Evans comments:

"...Did you know that persistent worry is a negative form of meditation? When you are worried about something, you can't get it out of your mind no matter what you are doing. A lot of people spend a lot of time 'meditating' on their financial situation. Some people meditate on their favorite television program or sports team. How do I know that? Because what we meditate on, what we think about the most and what consumes our affections, comes out in what we talk about the most. So let's not use the 'I don't know how to meditate' excuse as a reason for not focusing our minds on God and His Word."

If you have ever worried about something or focused your mind continuously on problems, then you already know how to meditate. You were just meditating on the wrong things! Everyone thinks on things, whether bad or good, positive or negative, worldly or spiritual. As a believer, you are to meditate on God, His works, and His Word. Here are some suggestions to help you get started.

MEDITATION GUIDELINES

-Quiet yourself in the presence of the Lord. Eliminate distractions. Sit in silence for a few minutes before you begin. In *Satisfy Your Soul*, Dr. Bruce Demarest writes:

"A quieted heart is our best preparation...Meditation refocuses us from ourselves and from the world so that we reflect on God's Word, His nature, His abilities, and His works...So we prayerfully ponder, muse, and 'chew' the words of Scripture...The goal is simply to permit the Holy Spirit to activate the life-giving Word of God."

The Bible says: *"Be still and know that I am God"* (Psalm 46:10). A.W. Tozer comments:

"Inward assurance comes out of the stillness. We must be still to know. There has hardly been another time in the history of the world when stillness was needed more than it is today, and there has surely not been another time when there was so little of it or when it was so hard to find."

Silence can be achieved in the midst of turbulent circumstances. Tozer comments regarding Psalm 46 where this passage is found:

"It is significant that the Psalm in which the words 'be still' occur is filled with noise and commotion. The earth shakes, the waters roar and are troubled, the mountains threaten to tumble into the midst of the sea, the nations rage, the kingdoms are moved, and the sound of war is heard throughout the land. Then a voice is heard out of the silence saying, 'Be still and know that I am God'."

In Psalm 46 the mountains are trembling, the earth is moving, water are raging, heathen are raging, and kingdoms are being moved—and God says, "Be still. Time to think about me."

-Focus on God in praise. You enter His gates into His presence through thanksgiving and praise (Psalm 100:4).

-Pray for the Spirit's help. Ask the Holy Spirit to assist you during your time of meditation. Pray these prayers:

Give ear to my words, O Lord, consider my meditation. Hearken unto the voice of my cry, my King, and my God: for unto thee will I pray. My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O Lord; in the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up. (Psalm 5:1-3)

Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength, and my redeemer. (Psalm 19:14)

Pray dependently for God to guide your meditations, as your sufficiency for all things comes from Him:

And such trust have we through Christ to God-ward: Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God... (2 Corinthians 3:5)

-Select a verse or passage of Scripture for meditation. It may be a passage that the Lord has quickened to your heart or one drawn from your regular systematic Bible study. It may be a verse from a devotional reading, one that deals with your present circumstances, or a passage you have heard in a sermon. Be sure it is simple, practical, and appropriate. Context is important in meditation, so first determine the context of the verse or phrase upon which you are meditating.

J. Vernon McGee notes:

“We are to meditate on the Word of God (which is God’s mirror that shows us what we really are). We are to allow the Word to shape our lives. You can become as busy as a termite in your church (and possibly with the same effect as a termite), but you won’t grow by means of activity. You will grow by meditating upon the Word of God--that is, by going over it again and again in your thinking until it becomes a part of your life.”

-Read the verse or passage slowly, thinking carefully about each word and phrase. With each recitation of the verse, emphasize a different word and meditate on that word within the context of the whole.

Vance Havner notes that *“Speed-reading may be a good thing, but it was never meant for the Bible. It takes calm, thoughtful, prayerful meditation on the Word to extract its deepest nourishment.”*

Martin Luther explained that *“You should meditate not only in your heart, but also externally, by actually repeating and comparing oral speech and literal words of the book, reading and rereading them with diligent attention and reflection, so you may see what the Holy Spirit means by them.”*

-Meditate on each word and phrase of the verse or passage. David Shepherd says to *“Read it to get the facts, study it to get the meaning, meditate on it to get the benefit.”*

-Use questions and answers. Psalm 77, written by Asaph, indicates that when he was unable to sleep because of troubling circumstances, he meditated:

I cried unto God with my voice, even unto God with my voice; and he gave ear unto me. In the day of my trouble I sought the Lord: my sore ran in the night, and ceased not: my soul refused to be comforted. (Psalm 77:1-2)

As part of his meditation, Asaph posed questions and pondered the answers:

Will the Lord cast off forever? and will he be favorable no more? Is his mercy clean gone forever? doth his promise fail for evermore? Hath God forgotten to be gracious? hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies? Selah. (Psalm 77:7-9)

The questions and answers led him to meditate on God and the works of God

And I said, This is my infirmity: but I will remember the years of the right hand of the most High. I will remember the works of the Lord: surely I will remember thy wonders of old. I will meditate also of all thy work, and talk of thy doings. Thy way, O God, is in the sanctuary: who is so great a God as our God? Thou art the God that doest wonders: thou hast declared thy strength among the people. Thou hast with thine arm redeemed thy people, the sons of Jacob and Joseph. Selah. (Psalm 77:10-15)

He also meditated on God's power as revealed in creation:

The waters saw thee, O God, the waters saw thee; they were afraid: the depths also were troubled. The clouds poured out water: the skies sent out a sound: thine arrows also went abroad. The voice of thy thunder was in the heaven: the lightnings lightened the world: the earth trembled and shook. Thy way is in the sea, and thy path in the great waters, and thy footsteps are not known. (Psalm 77:16-19)

-Use a journal to:

- Outline the Scripture.
- Summarize the basic truths of the passage.
- Paraphrase the passage in your own words.
- Visualize the Scripture by drawing a sketch or diagram to illustrate it.

-Memorize the Scripture so that you can meditate on it continually. Thomas Manton states, *"Remember that memorization is a first step to meditation. You cannot chew what you have not placed in your mouth!"*

-Make the verse or passage you are meditating on accessible. Here are some ideas:

- Post the verse as a screen saver on your electronic device.
- Write out the passage on a note card or post-it note. Put it by the bathroom mirror, by your favorite chair, or take it with you on a walk so you can continue to meditate on it throughout the day.
- Use the voice recorder on your cell phone to record the passage for playback and further meditation.

-Pray about the passage. Remember that meditation is meant to be transformational, not just informational. Ask God to search your mind and reveal to you any wrong attitudes, motives, and thinking:

*Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts:
And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way
everlasting. (Psalms 139:23-24)*

Thomas Manton explains that “*What we take in by the Word we digest by meditation and let out by prayer.*”

William Bridge suggests that you begin your quiet time with reading, then meditation, then end in prayer fueled by your meditations. George Mueller advocates a similar sequence:

“Before this time my practice had been, at least for ten years previously, as an habitual thing, to give myself to prayer, after having dressed in the morning. Now I saw, that the most important thing I had to do was to give myself to the reading of the Word of God and to meditation on it, that thus my heart might be comforted, encouraged, warned, reproved, instructed; and that thus, whilst meditating, my heart might be brought into experiential communion with the Lord. I began therefore, to meditate on the New Testament, from the beginning, early in the morning.

The first thing I did, after having asked in a few words the Lord's blessing upon His precious Word, was to begin to meditate on the Word of God; searching, as it were, into every verse, to get blessing out of it; not for the sake of the public ministry of the Word; not for the sake or preaching on what I had meditated upon; but for the sake of obtaining food for my own soul.

The result I have found to be almost invariably this, that after a very few minutes my soul has been led to confession, or to thanksgiving, or to intercession, or to supplication; so that though I did not, as it were, give myself to prayer, but to meditation, yet it turned almost immediately more or less into prayer.”

-Worship. Dr. David Jeremiah explains that “*Worship is a measure of our perception, appreciation or understanding of who God is and what He has done.*” Meditation should always result in worship of our awesome God.

-Apply the passage to your life. Before you conclude your time of meditation, sit quietly and soak in the presence of the Lord. Listen for God to speak to you through the Holy Spirit and through your thoughts and impressions. Ask yourself:

- Does this passage reveal a sin I need to confess?
- Does this passage reveal something I should stop doing?
- Does this passage reveal something I should do?
- How can I apply this passage in my life today?

Meditation requires a response. To respond to Scripture is to agree with it and to apply it by putting it into practice in your everyday life. William Secker states that “*contemplation is a perspective glass to see our Savior in; but examination is a looking-glass to see ourselves in.*” The Bible explains it this way:

But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed. (James 1:22-25)

Andrew Murray says to “*hold the Word of God in your heart until it has affected every phase of your life...This is meditation.*”

Without application, we will be like the New Testament Gnostics who had a lot of knowledge but did not apply it to their lives.

CHAPTER SEVEN TEST

1. According to the opening quote by Tony Evans, you already know how to meditate. Why is that most likely a true statement?

2. Summarize what you learned about the following meditation methods:
 - Quieting yourself in the presence of the Lord.
 - Worshipping God.
 - Praying for the Holy Spirit's help.
 - Selecting Scriptures on which to meditate.
 - Reading the passage.
 - Meditating on each word of a passage.
 - Using questions and answers.
 - Using a journal to:
 - Outline the Scripture.
 - Summarize the basic truths of the passage.
 - Paraphrase the passage.
 - Visualize the passage.
 - Memorizing the passage.
 - Making the passage accessible.
 - Praying about the passage.
 - Worshipping God.
 - Applying the meditation to your life.

3. Review this chapter again and write a summary of the quotations by:

-Dr. Bruce Demarest	-Thomas Manton
-A.W. Tozer	-William Bridge
-J. Vernon McGee	-George Mueller
-Vance Havner	-Dr. David Jeremiah
-Martin Luther	-William Secker
-David Shepherd	-Andrew Murray

CHAPTER EIGHT

EMPLOYING METHODS OF MEDITATION

Part Two

OBJECTIVES:

Upon completion of this chapter you will be able:

- Complete a meditation on a verse using the methods demonstrated in this chapter.
- Complete a meditation on a passage using the methods demonstrated in this chapter.
- Complete a meditation on a topic using the methods demonstrated in this chapter.

INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides examples of how to meditate, using the methods discussed in Chapter Seven. Examples are given of meditating on a verse, a passage, and a topic. An example of formulating relevant questions is also included.

MEDITATION ON A VERSE

To meditate on a verse, begin by reading it slowly, thinking carefully about each word and phrase. Emphasize a different word each time you read the verse and meditate on that word within the context of the whole verse. Here is an example drawn from John 3:16, one of the best-known verses in the Bible.

-Read the entire verse. Example: John 3:16

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

-Read the verse repeatedly, emphasizing a different word or phrase in each reading.

***For** God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*

*For **God so loved** the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*

*For God so loved **the world**, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*

*For God so loved the world, **that he gave** his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*

*For God so loved the world, that he gave **his only begotten Son**, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*

*For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, **that whosoever believeth in him** should not perish, but have everlasting life.*

*For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him **should not perish**, but have everlasting life.*

*For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, **but** have everlasting life.*

*For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but **have everlasting life**.*

-Meditate on each word and phrase of the passage. Continuing with John 3:16, here is an example of thoughts drawn from meditating on each word and phrase of the verse:

For... The word “for” links this verse to what was previously written. Read what was previously written and you will find that the writer described a historical event from the time of Moses (John 3:14).

And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up. (John 3:14,ASV)

If you are not familiar with the story, take time to read it in Numbers 21:4-9. The incident of the serpent was typical of the death of Christ. The reason was “for” all who believed on Him to be saved. Think about the meaning of the serpent being lifted up in the wilderness. Think about how that applies to you. Thank God for lifting up Jesus for the sins of the world.

God so loved...Meditate on the love of your Heavenly Father (Ephesians 1:3); of Jesus, the Son (John 1:1); and the Holy Spirit (Acts 5:3-4). In this verse, obviously “God” is used of the Father, who gave His Son. Think about this great sacrifice and praise God for it. Dwell on the difference between God’s love for you and the indifferent “gods” of philosophy and religion that have done nothing to change you or save you. Ask yourself this question: Could you love someone so much that you would sacrifice your only child for them? That is what God did for you.

The world...This term not only denotes the universe created by God, but it also represents all people of the world. Think about the condition of the world today and the amazing truth that God loves the world despite sin—the murders, abortions, cruelty, abuse, and

immorality. Ask God to give you His love for the world and for those who are unlovely. Thank Him for His love for you.

That He gave... Giving is a characteristic of God. He has given us life (Acts 17:25), and His blessings are evident daily (Acts 14:17). He is the source of all good gifts (James 1:17). The greatest gift of all was the gift of His Son. Join Paul in declaring: “*Thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift*” (2 Corinthians 9:15). Pray for those who have yet to receive this wonderful gift from God. List all of the gifts of God which He has given you and thank Him for each.

His only begotten Son... “Only begotten” denotes that Jesus was “unique in kind”. He is the Son of God as declared by the prophets (Isaiah 9:6); angels (Luke 1:32); the Father (Matthew 3:17); Himself (Mark 14:62); His disciples (Matthew 16:16); His enemies (Matthew 27:54); and by His resurrection from the dead (Romans 1:4). Meditate on the assurances the Word provides that Jesus is God’s Son, given by God to die for your sins.

That whosoever believes on Him... The term “whosoever” means everyone, revealing the universality of God’s plan of salvation. Focus on the word “believes”. This means not only those who initially believe in Him for salvation, but those who continue to believe in Him. If you have not truly believed in Jesus, do so now. Ask God to help you in any areas of your life where you still have unbelief operating.

Should not perish... Who will not perish? Those who believe. The fact that they will not perish means that there are some who will perish. Who are the ones who will perish? Those who have not believed. Turn your meditation into a prayer for unbelievers you know who need to accept Christ. Thank God that you will not perish because of the sacrifice for your sin made by Jesus Christ.

But have eternal life... Think about eternal life. It is not simply eternal existence, for the wicked will exist eternally (2 Thessalonians 1:9). The final abode of those who reject the Father’s gift of eternal life is called “the second death” (Revelation 2:11; 20:6,14) which is eternal separation from God (2 Thessalonians 1:9). Eternal life means living forever in God’s presence along with all of the wonders that it involves. Meditate on what it will be like to live in the presence of God for all eternity. It will be a state of glory (Romans 2:10; 2 Corinthians 4:17), rest (Hebrews 4:11), and happiness (Matthew 25:21). Use Revelation 21 and meditate on what it is like in the new place Christ is preparing for you.

-Use a journal to:

-Outline the verse. Using the example of John 3:16:

- | | | |
|------|--------------------|---------------------------------------|
| I. | God’s love: | For God so loved the world... |
| II. | God’s gift: | That He gave His only begotten Son... |
| III. | God’s requirement: | That whosoever believes in Him... |
| IV. | God’s assurance: | Shall not perish... |
| V. | God’s promise: | But have everlasting life. |

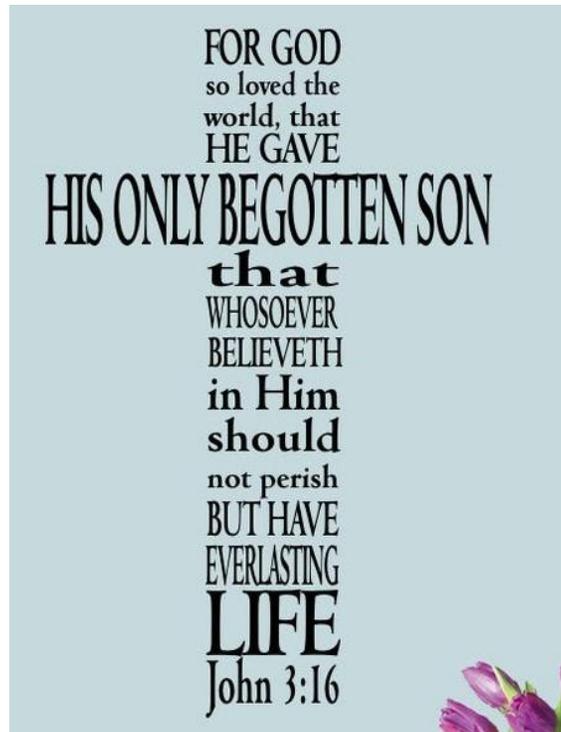
-Summarize the basic truths of the verse. Using the example of John 3:16:

“The basic truths of this verse are that God loved the world so much—including me—that He gave the greatest gift ever: The gift of eternal life through the sacrifice Jesus Christ, His Son.”

-Paraphrase the verse in your own words. Here is an example:

“Because God loved me so much, He gave His only Son so that if I believe in Him, I will not perish either through death or separation from Him. I will have everlasting life.”

-Visualize the verse. What comes to your mind when you think about John 3:16?
Here is one person’s visualization:



MEDITATION ON A PASSAGE

The Book of Jude consists of one chapter. It is used here as example of meditation on a passage.

Outline The Passage:

If you have difficulty outlining, use the Legacy Bible Outlines to help get you started. Available free at <http://www.harvestime.org>

- I. Introduction: Greetings. (1-2)
 - A. From Jude: (1)
 - 1. Brother of James.
 - 2. Bond servant of Jesus Christ.
 - B. To those: (2)
 - 1. Sanctified by God.
 - 2. Preserved in Christ.
 - 3. Called.
 - C. How the message is presented. (2)
 - 1. With mercy.
 - 2. With peace.
 - 3. With love.
- II. Purpose. (3)
 - A. Original purpose: Common salvation.
 - B. Revised purpose: Contend for the faith.
- III. Why we need to contend for the faith: Because of certain ungodly men.
 - Their characteristics: (4)
 - A. Crept in unawares.
 - B. Ordained to condemnation.
 - C. Ungodly.
 - D. Turning God's grace to lasciviousness.
 - E. Denying the Lord Jesus Christ.
- IV. The certainty of judgment. (*Three historical examples of apostasy to remember and be warned.*) (5-7)
 - A. Israel: An example of unbelief. Once saved, afterward destroyed.
 - B. Angels: An example of rebellion. Left their first estate and are reserved in chains.
 - C. Sodom and Gomorrah: An example of sexual immorality.
- V. Description of the conduct of these ungodly men. (8-10)
 - A. Filthy dreamers.
 - B. Defiling the flesh.
 - C. Despising dominion.
 - D. Speaking evil of dignities.
 - 1. Michael the archangel didn't dare speak evil even against the devil.
 - 2. These men speak arrogant, evil words about things they do not know.
 - E. Corrupting natural things.
- VI. Description of these ungodly men by example. (11) They have:
 - A. Gone-the way of Cain.
 - B. Run-after the error of Balaam.
 - C. Perished-in the gainsaying of Core.
- VII. Description of these ungodly men by metaphor (*comparison to natural examples*). (12-13)
 - A. Spots.
 - B. Clouds without water.
 - C. Dead trees.
 - D. Wild waves.
 - E. Wandering stars.

- VIII. Their judgment. (14-15)
- A. The messenger of judgment: Enoch. (14)
 - B. The message of judgment. (15)
 - 1. They will be judged by the Lord with 10,000 saints. (14)
 - a. For all their ungodly deeds they committed. (15)
 - b. For all their hard speeches (*defiant words*) spoken against Him. (15)
- IX. Description of the conduct of these ungodly men. (16)
- A. Murmuring.
 - B. Complaining.
 - C. Walking after their own lusts.
 - D. Speaking swelling words.
 - E. Respecting persons.
- X. How to keep from falling. (17-21)
- A. Take personal responsibility: “But beloved.”
 - B. Remember the warning of Jesus. (17) He warned that:
 - 1. Mockers would come in the last time. (18)
 - 2. They would walk after their own ungodly lusts. (18)
 - 3. They would separate themselves. (19)
 - 4. They would be sensual. (19)
 - 5. They would not have the Spirit of God. (19)
 - C. Build up yourself in the faith. (20)
 - D. Pray in the Holy Ghost. (20)
 - E. Keep yourself in the love of God. (21)
 - F. Watch for the return of the Lord Jesus Christ. (21)
- XI. How to keep others from falling. (22-23)
(*You are the instrument God uses.*)
- A. On some have compassion. (22)
 - B. Others save with fear. (23)
 - 1. Pull them out of the fire of sin/hell.
 - 2. Hate even the garments spotted by flesh.
- XII. Closing benediction. (24-25).
- A. Praise Him who is able to preserve you and present you.
 - 1. **Preserve:** He is able to keep you from falling. (24)
 - 2. **Present:** He is able to present you faultless. (24)
 - a. Before the presence of His glory.
 - b. With exceeding great joy.
 - B. Praise the only wise God our Savior. (25)
 - C. Praise Him by acknowledging: (25)
 - 1. His glory.
 - 2. His majesty.
 - 3. His dominion.
 - 4. His power.
 - D. Praise Him both now and forever. (25)
 - E. Seal your praises by declaring “Amen” (*meaning, “so be it”*). (25)

USING QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Continuing with the passage in Jude, these questions are an example of how to think about Scriptures in a question/answer format. Remember to apply your answers to your own life.

Verses 1-2:

What are three ways in which Jude identifies his readers as Christians?
What does preserved mean?
What does sanctified mean?
To what are we called as believers?
What does Jude declare can be multiplied in their lives?

Verse 3:

What was Jude planning to write about originally?
What did Jude write about instead?
What does the "common salvation" mean?
What does "contend" mean?
Who are the saints?

Verse 4:

Why is Jude warning his readers to contend for the faith?
Does the text indicate these false teachers would soon come or had already come?
Where had these ungodly men crept into?
What words in this verse describe Jesus Christ?
What three descriptions of these ungodly men are given in this verse?

Verses 5-7:

What two facts are mentioned about Israel in verse 5?
How do they relate to Jude's subject?
Who are the angels described in verse 6?
Where are these angels now?
What is meant by the "great day"?
To what must "eternal fire" refer?
What was the sin of Sodom and Gomorrah?
How was the city of Sodom and Gomorrah punished?

Verses 8-10:

What three characteristics of these ungodly men are given in verse 8?
Who was Michael?
Why did Michael refrain from accusing the devil?
What was the dispute between Michael and the devil?
Who are the ones mentioned in verse 10 who speak evil?
Of what do they speak evil?
How do these ungodly men corrupt themselves?

Verse 11:

What three examples of punishment are given in this verse?

What was Cain's sin?

What was Balaam's sin?

What was the sin of Core (Korah)?

What three words are used in this verse to describe the actions of ungodly men?

Verses 12-13:

Jude compares these ungodly men using three examples from nature. What are the examples?

What is similar about the three examples described?

How do these examples apply to these ungodly men?

Verses 14-15:

Who was Enoch?

Summarize the prophecy given by Enoch.

Verse 16:

What additional characteristics does this verse reveal about these ungodly men?

Verses 17-21:

Of what did Jesus warn?

What characteristics of ungodly men are given in these verses?

What is the plan given in verses 20-21 for keeping yourself from deception?

Who is responsible for building up faith according to verse 20?

What does the word "building" infer in relation to the speed of attaining maturity in the Christian life?

Who is responsible for keeping us in the love of God?

For what are we to be looking?

Verses 22-23:

How are we as believers to relate to those who are taken captive by these certain men?

What should we do?

What should we hate?

What does "save them with fear" mean?

Verses 24-25:

Who is able to keep us from falling?

What does it mean to be presented faultless before God?

What qualities of God are mentioned in this verse that we should acknowledge in our worship?

-Meditate on the commands in Jude:

-Earnestly contend for the faith: 3

-Remember words spoken to the apostles: 17

-Build yourself up in the faith: 20

-Pray in the Holy Ghost: 20

-Keep yourselves in the love of God: 21

-Have compassion on some,
making a difference: 22

-Save others with fear: 23

-Pull them out of the fire: 23

-Hate even their fleshly garments: 23

-Look for the mercy of Jesus: 21

-Meditate on the Old Testament examples used in Jude. What can you learn from each to apply spiritually in your life?

-The people of Israel, saved out of Egypt but later destroyed:

Numbers 13-14; 1 Corinthians 10:5-10; Hebrews 3:17

-The angels who did not keep their first estate: 2 Peter 2:4

-Sodom and Gomorrah: Genesis 18:1-19:24

-Cain: Genesis 4

-Balaam: Numbers 22-24

-Core (Korah): Numbers 16

-Enoch (the seventh descendant from Adam): Genesis 5:18

-Using Jude 17-21, meditate on the directives for protecting yourself from false teachers.

-Meditate on what Jude says about the tongue. He warns against:

-speaking evil of dignities: 8

-speaking evil of what one does not have knowledge: 10

-gainsaying of Core: 11

-hard speeches of ungodly sinners: 15

-murmuring and complaining people who speak swelling words: 16

Ask God to forgive you of any of these sins.

MEDITATION ON A TOPIC

The examples of topical meditation are drawn from the Song of Songs which opens with a cry for intimacy from the Bride. The Bride doesn't want to **know about** her Bridegroom, she wants to **know Him!** She is crying out for relationship with Jesus Christ, not devotion to a cause or a religion. She exclaims:

*Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth--for your love is better than wine...
(SOS 1:1-2)*

The Bride does not ask for a great ministry, but for an intimate relationship. Ministry must be born of relationship, for it is your passion that will take you through your problems to achieve your purpose. Your journey into intimacy with the Bridegroom begins with a seeking heart, and then you must "let Him" do the rest. Intimacy with Him is not a result of self-effort.

The following thoughts resulted from days of meditation on the subjects of **the kiss** and **the wine** mentioned in Song of Solomon 1:1-2.

The Kiss:

Every person alive will kiss the Son of God--in one of two ways:

-A kiss that results in death, like Judas gave to Jesus: Luke 22:47-48.

-A kiss that brings a new life of intimacy with God: SOS 1:2.

This request for a kiss is not speaking of light kisses given on the cheek or butterfly kisses that you give a casual acquaintance. This is a passionate desire for a spiritually intimate kiss from the Lord. The Bride does not ask for a sermon, a blessing, a miracle, or success. She desperately desires intimacy with her Bridegroom.

The cry for the kiss is the beginning of intimacy, the starting point of spiritual progress. She is not satisfied with an ordinary causal relationship. Kisses received only during Sunday morning church services are not enough. She wants Him to kiss her personally, not just receive a message from His prophets or teachers or even from an angel.

According to Rabbinic tradition, “kissing” in Scriptural context is a prophetic Word from God that brings spiritual life: “...every man lives by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the Lord” (*Deuteronomy 8:3*). The kiss is a metaphor for intimacy with God. Two other metaphors used for this intimacy is the seal of God (*SOS 8:6*) and the embrace of God (*2:5; 8:4*). The Bride asks for a kiss, and receives much more--she eventually receives the embrace of God and a seal confirming her union with Him (*SOS 8*). You cannot preserve your independence and receive this kiss. This spiritual kiss is the union of God’s Spirit with your spirit. Through the kiss, two become one.

Many people seek for a great revelation from God, not realizing that it is intimacy with Him that leads to such revelations. John, the beloved disciple, had the closest relationship with Jesus of all of the disciples and to him was given the great prophecy of future events, the book of Revelation.

Your Bridegroom does not want to just visit with you occasionally. He desires habitation, not visitation. He doesn’t want your life to be like a motel where you only check Him in when you are trouble. He wants to abide with you forever, in the good times and the bad.

God spoke to Moses face-to-face (*Numbers 12:8*). In Hebrew it actually says “mouth-to-mouth”. The Bible states: “*And when you speak my words you are speaking mouth-to-mouth. Your lips shall speak with my lips*” (*Proverbs 23:26, TPT*). The Bride wants His words flowing from His mouth to hers as a kiss upon her lips.

In the natural world, a kiss is the first thing one gives a newborn baby and the last thing one gives to a loved one at the time of death. In the Bible, kissing is used as an expression of affection, a pledge of peace, a token of reconciliation, or a sign of acceptance.

In the many cultures, the kiss is a token of sealing a marriage. “You may kiss the Bride,” the minister says at the end of the ceremony. The same is true for the spiritual kiss:

And I will betroth thee unto me forever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in lovingkindness, and in mercies. I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness: and thou shalt know the Lord. (Hosea 2:19-20)

The kiss is also a token of intimate friendship as demonstrated by David and Jonathan:

And as soon as the lad was gone, David arose out of a place toward the south, and fell on his face to the ground, and bowed himself three times: and they kissed one another, and wept one with another... (1 Samuel 20:41)

The spiritual kiss is the union of God's Spirit with your spirit, a deep and lasting experience that will sustain you in the difficult circumstances of life. The Hebrew word for "kiss" is *nashaq* which also means to equip and arm for battle. So in addition to developing intimacy, you also need His kisses—His prophetic Word—in order to become an effective spiritual warrior.

Once you experience the kiss, nothing else will satisfy. Just as a kiss can spread viruses in the natural world, the spiritual kiss of intimacy from your Bridegroom will begin a holy epidemic. A passionate love for Christ that is evident in your life will ignite the desire in others to be kissed by the Lord. Kisses in the natural world stir emotions and desire, as does a spiritual kiss from God.

We kiss Him with the dedication of our time, energy, talents, and finances but there is a deeper level yet. The Bride wants to be touched supernaturally through His Word:

Then the Lord put forth his hand, and touched my mouth. And the Lord said unto me, Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth. (Jeremiah 1:9, KJV)

How to experience the kiss of the Bridegroom:

- Eliminate competition. You cannot kiss two people at the same time. Who will you kiss spiritually?
- Examine yourself. Are you afraid to kiss Him because you have "bad breath" affected by the leeks and garlics of Egypt (representing sin)? Ask God to eliminate everything in your life that would interfere with the kiss of the Bridegroom.
- Explore the deep things of God through the Word, meditation, and prayer.
- Enjoy your relationship with God. It is not all about spiritual warfare. The first commandment is to love God--not do warfare, intercession, etc.
- Embrace His purposes which, as the Song Of Solomon reveals, involves going with your Bridegroom to minister in the world.
- Express your deepest emotions to Him through praise and worship.

The Wine:

Wine is the fermented juice of grapes. Wine was a common commodity in Jewish life. It was a significant trade item; was important in worship; was included as part of offerings; was used to pay debts; as a medicine; and as a beverage.

Grapes, from which wine is made, grow on vines. In the natural world, it takes a long time to make good wine: Planting seeds, watering, fertilizing, pruning, maintaining, and harvesting the grapes. The process takes three to five years for average quality wine grapes. Higher quality wine requires five to seven years.

In Palestine, grape harvesting was accompanied by great celebration. The ripe fruit was gathered in baskets, carried to the winepresses, and trampled to release the juice. The treading was done by one or more men, according to the size of the vat, who encouraged one another with shouts (Isaiah 16:9-10; Jeremiah 25:30; 48:33).

The grapevine: Jesus used the grapevine to describe the relationship of believers to Him saying, “I am the vine, you are the branches” (John 15:1). In John 15, the Father is described as the gardener or husbandman of the spiritual vineyard of true believers. As such, God watches over His vineyard so that no one can harm it (Isaiah 27:2-3).

In both the natural and spiritual worlds, it is God who enables growth (1 Corinthians 3:7). He prunes your spiritual vine so it will bear fruit (John 15:2). He cuts off “suckers” that will sap the life out of your spiritual vine. He eliminates pests--attitudes, habits, and sins--that would destroy the fruit of your life.

The Wine of the Spirit: Wine is symbolic of the infilling of the Spirit:

And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ... (Ephesians 5:18-20)

The infilling of the Holy Spirit results in joyous emotions and enthusiastic passion similar to what is experienced by one who has imbibed wine. When the gift of the Holy Spirit was given on the day of Pentecost, observers actually accused believers of being drunk:

Others mocking said, These men are full of new wine. But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, Ye men of Judaea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words: For these are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day. But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy...(Acts 2:13-18)

Parables about wine: Jesus told a parable about wine which is recorded in Matthew 9:17; Mark 2:22; and Luke 5:36-38. Today, wine is put in bottles, but at that time the skins of sheep and goats were used as containers. New skins were flexible and would expand during fermentation. An old skin lost its elasticity and if new grape juice was put into it, the skin would burst during the fermentation process. Jesus used this parable to expose the sinful attitudes of the Scribes and Pharisees who refused His teachings and stubbornly held to the traditions of the elders.

The lesson of this parable is that you cannot receive new things from God if you are unwilling to change. You must be flexible to change based upon the new wine of the Spirit of God and the

Word of God that is poured into your life. If you refuse to change, you will end up like the old wineskin--broken and unusable.

You are made new when you are born again. The old has passed away (2 Corinthians 5:17). The Holy Spirit continually regenerates and renews those who are new creatures in Christ because the new wine cannot be contained in your old vessel of worldly living, rigid traditions, and religious rituals. You are given a new heart, a new spirit, new moral principles, new faith, and a new destiny. You are supernaturally equipped to receive the new spiritual wine that the Bridegroom wants to pour into your life.

Wine in the Song of Songs: The Bride declares:

Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth: for thy love is better than wine. (SOS 1:2)

There comes a time that the comforts of life, possessions, money, prominence and relationships are not sufficient. It is then that we become willing to abandon all for intimacy with our Lord. The wine of this world no longer satisfies.

Whatever you give up, His love is better! In the Hebrew, "His love" is plural: "His loves". He loves you in many ways: Forgiving love; providing love; guiding love; comforting sustaining love. His love is better than wine or anything the world has to offer. Natural wine brings joy, it is a stimulant, and it deadens pain. The same is true of spiritual wine. It brings joy and comfort spiritually. It stimulates your spirit and deadens your pain. Once you experience this spiritual wine, you will forget the wine of the world.

The Bride also declares: "*His love is better than wine which revives drooping spirits.*" Whatever memories you have--whether good or bad--the wine of the Bridegroom's love will replace them. You will remember the wine of His love more than the wine of the world, the bitter taste left in your mouth by negative circumstances. You will remember the wine of His love even more than the pleasant things you have experienced. Your spirit will be revived!

The Prophet Isaiah admonishes:

Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. (Isaiah 55:1)

The wine of the Holy Spirit and the milk of God's Word are yours for the taking. All you have to do is come to Jesus, the source, and receive.

Misused, wine in the natural world can result in sinful drunkenness, shame, and sorrow. So when the Bride says His love is better than wine, she is also declaring that His love is greater than her sin.

Later on in the Song of Songs, the Bridegroom states that the Bride's love for Him is better than wine (SOS 4:10). She has matured to the point that she can return to Him the same love that He

has poured upon her. In SOS 5:1, He comes into the garden of His Bride's heart to receive worship which is symbolic of wine.

Wine is to be savored as it is imbibed, not gulped. Intimacy with God requires time in His presence. Sip on His Word regularly for when His Word kisses your mouth, your words are like the best wine because they are His Words.

When His Words kiss your lips, your words have the power to change lives and awaken those who are asleep spiritually:

And the roof of thy mouth like the best wine for my beloved, that goeth down sweetly, causing the lips of those that are asleep to speak. (SOS 7:9)

The Bride's words are compared to the best wine. The new wine of the gospel of the Kingdom was poured out at Pentecost (Acts 2:4,13,17). Wine symbolizes Christ's blood shed for the sins of all mankind (Luke 22:20). She becomes like the best wine because she partakes of His blood shed for her and drinks deeply of His love which is better than wine (SOS 1:2). What a compliment to be compared to the best wine. In the natural world, the best wine sells for hundreds of thousands of dollars.

What to do when you run out of wine. The first miracle Jesus did in His ministry on earth was turning water into wine:

And the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee; and the mother of Jesus was there: And both Jesus was called, and his disciples, to the marriage. And when they wanted wine, the mother of Jesus saith unto him, They have no wine. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, what have I to do with thee? mine hour is not yet come. His mother saith unto the servants, Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it. And there were set there six waterpots of stone, after the manner of the purifying of the Jews, containing two or three firkins apiece. Jesus saith unto them, Fill the waterpots with water. And they filled them up to the brim. And he saith unto them, Draw out now, and bear unto the governor of the feast. And they bare it. When the ruler of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and knew not whence it was: (but the servants which drew the water knew;) the governor of the feast called the bridegroom, And saith unto him, Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine; and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse: but thou hast kept the good wine until now. This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him. (John 2:1-11)

The natural process of making wine takes three to five years for average quality wine. Higher quality wine requires five to seven years. When Jesus turned water into wine, He accelerated the process. In the natural world, this wine had no past to be aged properly, but it was excellent wine. The same One who gave a past where there was no past can remove the painful and sinful past from your life.

So what do you do when you run out of wine?

- When you feel empty and dry spiritually.
- When you seem to have lost your spiritual passion.
- When the joy has run out of your life.

You take Mary's advice: "Whatsoever He says to you, do it." Wait for His command, then act. When Jesus turned water into wine, He accelerated the process. When you run out of wine spiritually, look to Jesus for the next step, take it, and expect divine acceleration in your life.

-Moses, hiding on the backside of the desert because of his failures, was out of wine spiritually. There he received a divine commission from God at the burning bush. The Lord said: "*I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people the children of Israel out of Egypt*" (Exodus 3:10). In Exodus 15 when Israel was without water in the desert, Moses was told to get up and do something about it at the Lord's command.

-Gideon, fearful of the enemy Midianites was directed by God to "*Go in this thy might, and thou shalt save Israel from the hand of the Midianites: have not I sent thee?*" (Judges 6:14).

-Joshua, whose forces were defeated at Ai, was commanded:

And the Lord said unto Joshua, Fear not, neither be thou dismayed: take all the people of war with thee, and arise, go up to Ai: see, I have given into thy hand the king of Ai, and his people, and his city, and his land. (Joshua 8:1)

-Jehoshaphat, facing a formidable enemy army, was told:

Ye shall not need to fight in this battle: set yourselves, stand ye still, and see the salvation of the Lord with you, O Judah and Jerusalem: fear not, nor be dismayed; tomorrow go out against them: for the Lord will be with you. (2 Chronicles 20:17)

If you feel empty spiritually and you have run out of spiritual wine, the answer is simple. Wait for Him to speak to you and then do exactly what He says. As you step out in obedience to His command, He will refill your vessel with new wine.

IT'S YOUR TURN

You have studied the methods of meditation and seen examples of the methods. Now it is your turn to apply what you have learned by meditating on a verse, passage, and topic as you do the test for this chapter.

CHAPTER EIGHT TEST

1. Complete a meditation on a verse using the methods demonstrated in this chapter.
2. Complete a meditation on a passage using the methods demonstrated in this chapter.
3. Complete a meditation on a topic using the methods demonstrated in this chapter.

CHAPTER NINE

SELECTING TOPICS FOR MEDITATION

PART ONE

OBJECTIVES:

Upon completion of this chapter you will be able to:

- List basic guidelines for selecting topics for meditation.
- List general topics for Biblical meditation.
- Select one topic and do a practice meditation.

INTRODUCTION

This chapter and chapters ten and eleven provide guidelines for selecting topics for Biblical meditation. Each topic and its accompanying verses can be used as an individual meditation, so these suggestions provide enough material for days, weeks, and months to come.

BASIC GUIDELINES

- Start with simple passages until you are familiar with the methods of meditation.
- Select one passage instead of multiple passages when you are first starting.
- Select practical passages that are applicable to your circumstances. For example, if you are fearful, meditate on the “fear not” passages.
- Chose appropriate passages. If you recently lost your spouse, meditating on Biblical guidelines for marriage would not be a good option. If you are beyond child-bearing age and have no children, then passages on raising children would probably not be the most relevant for you.

TOPICS FOR MEDITATION

Meditate on the person of God:

The first instance of meditation in the Bible is found in Genesis 24:63 where it records that Isaac went out into the field to meditate. There was no written Word of God at that time, so Isaac most likely meditated on what he knew about God:

Meditate on God's character and attributes:

The psalmist declared:

My meditation of him shall be sweet...(Psalm 104:34)

I have set the Lord always before me: because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved. (Psalm 16:8)

We have thought of thy lovingkindness, O God, in the midst of thy temple. According to thy name, O God, so is thy praise unto the ends of the earth: thy right hand is full of righteousness. (Psalm 48:9-10)

God the Father, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit are described in the Bible in terms of their nature. When we speak of "nature" we mean basic qualities which describe God. These qualities are also known as "attributes" which means "characteristics." Here is a list of attributes of God upon which you can meditate.

-God Is Eternal. The Trinity of God is eternal with no beginning and no ending:

Lord, Thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever Thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, Thou art God. (Psalms 90:1-2)

And Abraham planted a grove in Beersheba, and called there on the name of the Lord, the everlasting God. (Genesis 21:33)

-God Is A Spirit. This means He is without flesh and blood and therefore invisible to the natural eyes of man:

God is a Spirit: and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth. (John 4:24)

-God Is Sovereign. He is the ruling power over all the universe. Meditate on Ephesians 1 and Romans 9.

-God Is Omnipresent. He is present everywhere:

For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth... (2 Chronicles 16:9)

The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good. (Proverbs 15:3)

Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit? Or whither shall I flee from Thy presence? If I ascend up into Heaven, Thou art there: if I make my bed in Hell, Thou art there. (Psalms 139:7-8)

-God Is Omniscient. He knows all things:

...Thou knowest it altogether. (Psalms 139:4)

...God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things. (1 John 3:20)

...But all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do. (Hebrews 4:13)

-God Is Omnipotent. He is all powerful:

...I am the Almighty God... (Genesis 17:1)

...With God all things are possible. (Matthew 19:26)

...For the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. (Revelation 19:6)

God hath spoken once; twice have I heard this; that power belongeth unto God. (Psalms 62:11)

-God Is Unchanging. God does not change His person, nature, or divine purposes:

For I am the Lord, I change not... (Malachi 3:6)

Jesus Christ the same yesterday, to day, and for ever. (Hebrews 13:8)

-God Is Holy/righteous. God is sinless, absolutely pure:

...Ye shall be holy: for I the Lord your God am holy. (Leviticus 19:2)

-God Is Just. God is fair and impartial in judgment:

...A God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is He. (Deuteronomy 32:4)

-God Is Faithful. God keeps His promises and is absolutely trustworthy.

...He abideth faithful: He cannot deny Himself. (2 Timothy 2:13)

-God Is Benevolent. He is good, kind, and benevolent towards all of His creatures:

The Lord is good to all: and His tender mercies are over all His works. (Psalms 145:9)

-God Is Merciful. God shows continuous mercy to sinful mankind:

...The Lord God, merciful and gracious, long suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth. Keeping mercy for thousands... (Exodus 34:6-7)

-God Is Gracious. He shows undeserved kindness to sinful man:

...For I am gracious. (Exodus 22:27)

The Lord is gracious, and full of compassion; slow to anger, and of great mercy. (Psalms 145:8)

-God Is Loving. God is love:

He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love. (1 John 4:8)

-God Is Longsuffering. God "suffers long"--meaning that He does not immediately judge sin, but appeals to all men to repent and patiently waits for them to acknowledge their sins and turn to Him.

-God Is Wise. God shows deep understanding and keen discernment.

The Lord by wisdom hath founded the earth; by understanding hath He established the heavens. (Proverbs 3:19)

-God Is Infinite. God is not subject to natural and human limitations or to limitations of space or time:

But will God indeed dwell on the earth? behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee: how much less this house that I have builded? (1 Kings 8:27)

The Lord shall reign for ever and ever. (Exodus 15:18)

Meditate on the names of God:

Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another: and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name. (Malachi 3:16)

I have remembered thy name, O Lord, in the night, and have kept thy law. (Psalm 119:55)

Meditate on the works of God:

Review what God has done in your life, in the lives of others, and in the world.

I will remember the deeds of the Lord; yes, I will remember your wonders of old. I will ponder all your work, and meditate on your mighty deeds. Your way, O God, is holy. What god is great like our God? (Psalm 77:11-13)

The works of the Lord are great, sought out of all them that have pleasure therein. His work is honourable and glorious: and his righteousness endureth forever. He hath made his wonderful works to be remembered: the Lord is gracious and full of compassion. (Psalm 111:2-4)

I remember the days of old; I meditate on all thy works; I muse on the work of thy hands. I stretch forth my hands unto thee: my soul thirsteth after thee, as a thirsty land. Selah. (Psalm 143:5-6)

Meditate on the creation of God:

When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained. (Psalm 8:3)

Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature? And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. (Matthew 6:26-29)

Consider the ravens: for they neither sow nor reap; which neither have storehouse nor barn; and God feedeth them: how much more are ye better than the fowls? And which of you with taking thought can add to his stature one cubit? If ye then be not able to do that thing which is least, why take ye thought for the rest? Consider the lilies how they grow: they toil not, they spin not; and yet I say unto you, that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. If then God so clothe the grass, which is to day in the field, and tomorrow is cast into the oven; how much more will he clothe you, O ye of little faith? And seek not ye what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, neither be ye of doubtful mind. For all these things do the nations of the world seek after: and your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things. But rather seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you. (Luke 12:24-31)

Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise: Which having no guide, overseer, or ruler, Provideth her meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest. (Proverbs 6:6-8)

The waters saw thee, O God, the waters saw thee; they were afraid: the depths also were troubled. The clouds poured out water: the skies sent out a sound: thine arrows also went abroad. The voice of thy thunder was in the heaven: the lightnings lightened the world: the earth trembled and shook.⁹ Thy way is in the sea, and thy path in the great waters, and thy footsteps are not known. (Psalm 77:16-19)

Meditate on the Word of God:

This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou may observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success. (Joshua 1:8)

Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. (Psalm 1:2)

I have rejoiced in the way of thy testimonies, as much as in all riches. I will meditate in thy precepts, and have respect unto thy ways. I will delight myself in thy statutes: I will not forget thy word. (Psalms 119:14-16).

But Your servant meditates on Your statutes. (Psalm 119:23, NKJV)

Make me understand the way of Your precepts; So shall I meditate on Your wonderful works. (Psalm 119:27, NKJV)

My hands also will I lift up unto thy commandments, which I have loved; and I will meditate in thy statutes. (Psalm 119:48)

...I will meditate in thy precepts. (Psalm 119:78)

O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day. (Psalm 119:97)

I have more understanding than all my teachers: for thy testimonies are my meditation. (Psalm 119:99)

*I rise before the dawning of the morning,
And cry for help;
I hope in Your word.
My eyes are awake through the night watches,
That I may meditate on Your word. (Psalm 119:147-148)*

Meditate on the attributes of Jesus:

Because He is part of the Trinity of God, Jesus Christ has the same attributes as God.

Omnipotent:	All powerful.	Matthew 28:18
Omniscient:	Knows everything.	Matthew 16:30; John 21:17
Omnipresent:	Present everywhere.	Matthew 18:20; 28:20
Eternal:	Has no beginning or end.	John 1:1-2; 8:58
Unchangeable:	Remains the same.	Hebrews 13:8
Perfect:	Absolutely holy.	Colossians 1:19; 2:9-10

Meditate on the attributes of the Holy Spirit:

When we speak of the nature of the Holy Spirit, we are referring to the basic qualities which describe Him. The Bible teaches that the Holy Spirit is:

Omnipresent:	Present everywhere.	Psalms 139:7
Omniscient:	Knows all things.	1 Corinthians 2:10-11
Omnipotent:	All powerful.	Psalms 62:11
Eternal:	No beginning or end.	Hebrews 9:14
Holy:	Righteous.	Romans 1:3-4
Truthful:	Bears witness to the truth.	1 John 5:7

Meditate on doctrine and faith:

Paul admonished young Timothy to...

Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all. (1 Timothy 4:15)

Meditate on 1 Timothy 1-14 to discover the “things” to which Paul is referring.

Meditate on what God has done for you:

David said, “*I call to remembrance my song in the night: I commune with mine own heart: and my spirit made diligent search*” (Psalm 77:6). David remembered what God had done for him in the dark nights of his life. He declared: “*I remember the days of old; I meditate on all thy works; I muse on the work of thy hands*” (Psalm 143:5).

Meditate on that which is eternal:

If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. (Colossians 3:1-3, NKJV)

Set your mind on things above by meditating on the wonderful place Christ is preparing for you. Use verses from John 14 and from the descriptions of the new heavens and earth in Revelation 21.

Meditate on your spiritual life:

Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established. Turn not to the right hand nor to the left: remove thy foot from evil. (Proverbs 4:26-27)

But let a man examine himself...(1 Corinthians 11:28)

Meditate on specific areas of need:

For example, if you are in need of peace, meditate on verses concerning peace. If you need strength, meditate on verses about strength. If you are grieving, seek verses on comfort upon which to meditate. Meditate on verses regarding temptation if you are going through a test of your faith. Check the Biblical Counseling Database for a list of relevant topics and Scriptures: <http://www.biblicalcounselingdatabase.net>

Meditate on these things:

Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things. (Philippians 4:8)

The Message version states it this way...

Summing it all up, friends, I'd say you'll do best by filling your minds and meditating on things true, noble, reputable, authentic, compelling, gracious—the best, not the worst; the beautiful, not the ugly; things to praise, not things to curse. Put into practice what you learned from me, what you heard and saw and realized. Do that, and God, who makes everything work together, will work you into his most excellent harmonies.

CHAPTER NINE TEST

1. List basic guidelines for selecting topics for meditation.
2. List the general topics for Biblical suggested in this chapter.
3. Choose one topic and prepare a meditation on it. Include an outline, paraphrase, questions, diagrams, etc.

CHAPTER TEN

SELECTING TOPICS FOR MEDITATION

PART TWO

OBJECTIVES:

Upon completion of this chapter you will be able to:

- Define the word “Selah.”
- List guidelines for studying the “Selah” Scriptures.
- Use the “Selah” Scriptures for meditation.

INTRODUCTION

This chapter continues identifying suggested topics for meditation by focusing on the “Selah” Scriptures. These are specific verses in the Bible where the Holy Spirit uses the word “Selah” to indicate that we should pause and take time to reflect.

SELAH

The word “Selah,” [*celah*], is from the primary Hebrew root word “*calah*” which means “*to hang*,” and by implication means to measure or weigh. In Biblical history, money, food, and other valuables were weighed by hanging or suspending them on a type of balance to determine their value (the equivalent of a modern measuring scale). There is an example of this in the book of Job:

It (wisdom) cannot be gotten for gold, neither shall silver be weighed for the price thereof. It cannot be valued with the gold of Ophir, with the precious onyx, or the sapphire. (Job 28:15-16)

The word translated “valued” is the same Hebrew word as “Selah” and means “measured against.” In this context, it means that wisdom cannot be measured against the gold of Ophir, the precious onyx, or the sapphire.

The translation of “valued” here illustrates measuring something for an exchange--i.e. wisdom cannot be measured with the gold of Ophir because it is beyond that value. In Job 28:19 we see this illustration again:

The topaz of Ethiopia shall not equal it (wisdom), neither shall it be valued with pure gold. (Job 28:19)

Again, this word translated “valued” is the Hebrew word meaning “measured.” This passage

declares that wisdom cannot be measured against gold.

Through these examples of comparing scripture with scripture and noting a word's context, we can discover the true meaning of words. Since the Hebrew word "*calah*" means to measure, as in weighing something in the balances, we can better understand the meaning of the word "Selah" [*celah*], from which it is derived. "Selah" means we should pause to carefully examine, measure, value and apply to our lives what has been said.

HOW TO STUDY THE SELAH SCRIPTURES

To meditate on the "Selah" Scriptures:

- Print out the information in this chapter put it in a notebook
- Use different versions of the Bible to study the "Selah" verses.
- Study the "Selah" verses in the context of the chapter where they occur.
- Memorize each "Selah" verse as you study it.
- Most importantly: Be sure to "Selah" on the verses you are studying--pause and lift up the truth of the Word for meditation, reflection, and application.

A YEAR-LONG SCHEDULE

Here is a suggested schedule for spending a year meditating on the "Selah" Scriptures.

- ___ **Week 1:** **Study the word "Selah."** What is the meaning of the word? What does it mean to you? How can you institute "Selah" in your devotional life?

- ___ **Week 2:** **Read each verse in the Bible where "Selah" is used for an overview of the passages you will study during this year.** Record any initial thoughts you may have.

- ___ **Week 3:** **Psalm chapter 3 verses 2, 4, and 8.**
 - According to these verses, what does God want you to pause, think about, and dwell on?
 - Why do you think God wants you to think on this?
 - Record the thoughts God gives you as you "Selah" on these verses.
 - How can you apply these "Selah" verses to your life?

- ___ **Week 4:** **Psalm chapter 4 verses 2 and 4.**
 - According to these verses, what does God want you to pause, think about, and dwell on?
 - Why do you think God wants you to think on this?
 - Record the thoughts God gives you as you "Selah" on these verses.
 - How can you apply these "Selah" verses to your life?

- ___ **Week 5:** **Psalm chapter 7 verse 5.**
-According to these verses, what does God want you to pause, think about, and dwell on?
-Why do you think God wants you to think on this?
-Record the thoughts God gives you as you “Selah” on these verses.
-How can you apply these “Selah” verses to your life?
- ___ **Week 6:** **Psalm chapter 9 verses 16 and 20.**
-According to these verses, what does God want you to pause, think about, and dwell on?
-Why do you think God wants you to think on this?
-Record the thoughts God gives you as you “Selah” on these verses.
-How can you apply these “Selah” verses to your life?
- ___ **Week 7:** **Psalm chapter 20 verse 3.**
-According to these verses, what does God want you to pause, think about, and dwell on?
-Why do you think God wants you to think on this?
-Record the thoughts God gives you as you “Selah” on these verses.
-How can you apply these “Selah” verses to your life?
- ___ **Week 8:** **Psalm chapter 21 verse 2.**
-According to these verses, what does God want you to pause, think about, and dwell on?
-Why do you think God wants you to think on this?
-Record the thoughts God gives you as you “Selah” on these verses.
-How can you apply these “Selah” verses to your life?
- ___ **Week 9:** **Psalm chapter 24 verses 6 and 10.**
-According to these verses, what does God want you to pause, think about, and dwell on?
-Why do you think God wants you to think on this?
-Record the thoughts God gives you as you “Selah” on these verses.
-How can you apply these “Selah” verses to your life?
- ___ **Week 10:** **Psalm chapter 32 verses 4, 5, and 7.**
-According to these verses, what does God want you to pause, think about, and dwell on?
-Why do you think God wants you to think on this?
-Record the thoughts God gives you as you “Selah” on these verses.
-How can you apply these “Selah” verses to your life?
- ___ **Week 11:** **Psalm chapter 39 verses 5 and 11.**
-According to these verses, what does God want you to pause, think about, and dwell on?
-Why do you think God wants you to think on this?

- Record the thoughts God gives you as you “Selah” on these verses.
- How can you apply these “Selah” verses to your life?

___ **Week 12:**

Psalm chapter 44 verse 8.

- According to these verses, what does God want you to pause, think about, and dwell on?
- Why do you think God wants you to think on this?
- Record the thoughts God gives you as you “Selah” on these verses.
- How can you apply these “Selah” verses to your life?

___ **Week 13:**

Psalm chapter 46 verses 3, 7, and 11.

- According to these verses, what does God want you to pause, think about, and dwell on?
- Why do you think God wants you to think on this?
- Record the thoughts God gives you as you “Selah” on these verses.
- How can you apply these “Selah” verses to your life?

___ **Week 14:**

Psalm chapter 47 verse 4.

- According to these verses, what does God want you to pause, think about, and dwell on?
- Why do you think God wants you to think on this?
- Record the thoughts God gives you as you “Selah” on these verses.
- How can you apply these “Selah” verses to your life?

___ **Week 15:**

Psalm chapter 48 verse 8.

- According to these verses, what does God want you to pause, think about, and dwell on?
- Why do you think God wants you to think on this?
- Record the thoughts God gives you as you “Selah” on these verses.
- How can you apply these “Selah” verses to your life?

___ **Week 16:**

Psalm chapter 49 verses 13 and 15.

- According to these verses, what does God want you to pause, think about, and dwell on?
- Why do you think God wants you to think on this?
- Record the thoughts God gives you as you “Selah” on these verses.
- How can you apply these “Selah” verses to your life?

___ **Week 17:**

Psalm chapter 50 verse 6.

- According to these verses, what does God want you to pause, think about, and dwell on?
- Why do you think God wants you to think on this?
- Record the thoughts God gives you as you “Selah” on these verses.
- How can you apply these “Selah” verses to your life?

- ___ **Week 18:** **Psalm chapter 52, verses 3 and 5.**
-According to these verses, what does God want you to pause, think about, and dwell on?
-Why do you think God wants you to think on this?
-Record the thoughts God gives you as you “Selah” on these verses.
-How can you apply these “Selah” verses to your life?
- ___ **Week 19:** **Psalm chapter 54 verse 3.**
-According to these verses, what does God want you to pause, think about, and dwell on?
-Why do you think God wants you to think on this?
-Record the thoughts God gives you as you “Selah” on these verses.
-How can you apply these “Selah” verses to your life?
- ___ **Week 20:** **Psalm chapter 55 verses 7 and 19.**
-According to these verses, what does God want you to pause, think about, and dwell on?
-Why do you think God wants you to think on this?
-Record the thoughts God gives you as you “Selah” on these verses.
-How can you apply these “Selah” verses to your life?
- ___ **Week 21:** **Psalm chapter 57 verses 3 and 6.**
-According to these verses, what does God want you to pause, think about, and dwell on?
-Why do you think God wants you to think on this?
-Record the thoughts God gives you as you “Selah” on these verses.
-How can you apply these “Selah” verses to your life?
- ___ **Week 22:** **Psalm chapter 59 verses 5 and 13.**
-According to these verses, what does God want you to pause, think about, and dwell on?
-Why do you think God wants you to think on this?
-Record the thoughts God gives you as you “Selah” on these verses.
-How can you apply these “Selah” verses to your life?
- ___ **Week 23:** **Psalm chapter 60 verse 4.**
-According to these verses, what does God want you to pause, think about, and dwell on?
-Why do you think God wants you to think on this?
-Record the thoughts God gives you as you “Selah” on these verses.
-How can you apply these “Selah” verses to your life?
- ___ **Week 24:** **Psalm chapter 61 verse 4.**
-According to these verses, what does God want you to pause, think about, and dwell on?
-Why do you think God wants you to think on this?

- Record the thoughts God gives you as you “Selah” on these verses.
- How can you apply these “Selah” verses to your life?

___ **Week 25:**

Psalm chapter 62 verses 4 and 8.

- According to these verses, what does God want you to pause, think about, and dwell on?
- Why do you think God wants you to think on this?
- Record the thoughts God gives you as you “Selah” on these verses.
- How can you apply these “Selah” verses to your life?

___ **Week 26:**

Psalm chapter 66 verses 4, 7, and 15

- According to these verses, what does God want you to pause, think about, and dwell on?
- Why do you think God wants you to think on this?
- Record the thoughts God gives you as you “Selah” on these verses.
- How can you apply these “Selah” verses to your life?

___ **Week 27:**

Psalm chapter 67 verses 1 and 4.

- According to these verses, what does God want you to pause, think about, and dwell on?
- Why do you think God wants you to think on this?
- Record the thoughts God gives you as you “Selah” on these verses.
- How can you apply these “Selah” verses to your life?

___ **Week 28:**

Psalm chapter 68 verses 7, 19, and 32.

- According to these verses, what does God want you to pause, think about, and dwell on?
- Why do you think God wants you to think on this?
- Record the thoughts God gives you as you “Selah” on these verses.
- How can you apply these “Selah” verses to your life?

___ **Week 29:**

Psalm chapter 75 verse 3.

- According to these verses, what does God want you to pause, think about, and dwell on?
- Why do you think God wants you to think on this?
- Record the thoughts God gives you as you “Selah” on these verses.
- How can you apply these “Selah” verses to your life?

___ **Week 30:**

Psalm chapter 77 verses 3, 9 and 15.

- According to these verses, what does God want you to pause, think about, and dwell on?
- Why do you think God wants you to think on this?
- Record the thoughts God gives you as you “Selah” on these verses.
- How can you apply these “Selah” verses to your life?

- ___ **Week 31:** **Psalm chapter 81 verse 7.**
-According to these verses, what does God want you to pause, think about, and dwell on?
-Why do you think God wants you to think on this?
-Record the thoughts God gives you as you “Selah” on these verses.
-How can you apply these “Selah” verses to your life?
- ___ **Week 32:** **Psalm chapter 82 verse 2.**
-According to these verses, what does God want you to pause, think about, and dwell on?
-Why do you think God wants you to think on this?
-Record the thoughts God gives you as you “Selah” on these verses.
-How can you apply these “Selah” verses to your life?
- ___ **Week 33:** **Psalm chapter 83 verse 8.**
-According to these verses, what does God want you to pause, think about, and dwell on?
-Why do you think God wants you to think on this?
-Record the thoughts God gives you as you “Selah” on these verses.
-How can you apply these “Selah” verses to your life?
- ___ **Week 34:** **Psalm chapter 84 verses 4 and 8.**
-According to these verses, what does God want you to pause, think about, and dwell on?
-Why do you think God wants you to think on this?
-Record the thoughts God gives you as you “Selah” on these verses.
-How can you apply these “Selah” verses to your life?
- ___ **Week 35:** **Psalm chapter 85 verse 2.**
-According to these verses, what does God want you to pause, think about, and dwell on?
-Why do you think God wants you to think on this?
-Record the thoughts God gives you as you “Selah” on these verses.
-How can you apply these “Selah” verses to your life?
- ___ **Week 36:** **Psalm chapter 87 verses 3 and 6.**
-According to these verses, what does God want you to pause, think about, and dwell on?
-Why do you think God wants you to think on this?
-Record the thoughts God gives you as you “Selah” on these verses.
-How can you apply these “Selah” verses to your life?
- ___ **Week 37:** **Psalm chapter 88 verses 7 and 10.**
-According to these verses, what does God want you to pause, think about, and dwell on?
-Why do you think God wants you to think on this?

- Record the thoughts God gives you as you “Selah” on these verses.
- How can you apply these “Selah” verses to your life?

___ **Week 38:**

Psalm chapter 89 verses 4, 37, 45, and 48.

- According to these verses, what does God want you to pause, think about, and dwell on?
- Why do you think God wants you to think on this?
- Record the thoughts God gives you as you “Selah” on these verses.
- How can you apply these “Selah” verses to your life?

___ **Week 39:**

Psalm chapter 140 verses 3, 5, and 8.

- According to these verses, what does God want you to pause, think about, and dwell on?
- Why do you think God wants you to think on this?
- Record the thoughts God gives you as you “Selah” on these verses.
- How can you apply these “Selah” verses to your life?

___ **Week 40:**

Psalm chapter 143 verse 6.

- According to these verses, what does God want you to pause, think about, and dwell on?
- Why do you think God wants you to think on this?
- Record the thoughts God gives you as you “Selah” on these verses.
- How can you apply these “Selah” verses to your life?

___ **Week 41:**

Read the book of Habakkuk where the remaining “Selah” verses are located. Who was the book written to? What is its theme? What lessons of Habakkuk can you apply in your own life?

___ **Week 42:**

Outline Habakkuk chapter 3 where the “Selah” verses are located.

___ **Week 43:**

Study the “Selah” verses in their context in Habakkuk 3:3, 9, and 13. Prepare a summary document on these verses.

___ **Week 44-48:**

Paraphrase each “Selah” verse in Habakkuk your own words.

___ **Week 49-51:**

Review the notes you made on each verse during the past year.

___ **Week 52:**

Pray over each “Selah” verse during this final week of the year. Thank God for what the Holy Spirit has taught you in this study and ask Him to help you apply what you have learned to your life. Continue to “Selah” on these verses in your personal devotions.

CHAPTER TEN TEST

1. What does the word “Selah” mean?
2. List guidelines for studying the “Selah” Scriptures.
3. Choose one “Selah” topic and do a meditation on it. Include an outline, paraphrase, questions, and diagram.
4. Optional: Using the guide in this chapter, meditate on all of the “Selah” verses during the next year.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

SELECTING TOPICS FOR MEDITATION

PART THREE

OBJECTIVES:

Upon completion of this chapter you will be able to:

- List categories for Biblical meditation given in this chapter.
- Identify things the Bible commands Believers to remember.
- Identify things the Bible commands Believers to consider.
- Identify things the Bible commands Believers should ponder.
- Write a summary of the Biblical commands to wait on the Lord identifying:
 - Reasons to wait on the Lord.
 - Difficulties of waiting on the Lord.
 - Benefits of waiting on the Lord.
 - How to wait on the Lord.
 - When to wait on the Lord.
 - What we are commanded to wait for.
- Select one statement from each of the main categories and do a practice meditation on it.

INTRODUCTION

This chapter continues identifying suggested topics for meditation. The categories discussed include things the Bible commands us to remember, consider, ponder, think about, and wait on.

REMEMBER THESE THINGS

Things the Bible directs Believers to remember provide great subjects for meditation.

-Remember, repent, and do your first works.

Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works.
(Revelation 2:5)

-Remember what you have received and heard.

Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent.
(Revelation 3:3)

-Remember to do all God's commandments.

That ye may remember, and do all my commandments, and be holy unto your God.
(Numbers 15:40)

-Remember what God has done in the past.

And thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments, or no. (Deuteronomy 8:2)

Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure. (Isaiah 46:9)

I remember the days of old; I meditate on all thy works; I muse on the work of thy hands. (Psalm 143:5)

-Remember the miracles of the Lord.

I will [earnestly] recall the deeds of the Lord; yes, I will [earnestly] remember the wonders [You performed for our fathers] of old. (Psalm 77:11,TAB)

-Remember that it is the Lord who gives you power to get wealth.

But thou shalt remember the Lord thy God: for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth, that he may establish his covenant which he sware unto thy fathers, as it is this day. (Deuteronomy 8:18)

-Remember that God redeemed you out of bondage.

And thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman in the land of Egypt, and the Lord thy God redeemed thee: therefore I command thee this thing to day. (Deuteronomy 15:15)

-Remember the marvelous works He has done.

Remember his marvellous works that he hath done, his wonders, and the judgments of his mouth. (1 Chronicles 16:12)

I will remember the works of the Lord: surely I will remember thy wonders of old. I will meditate also of all thy work, and talk of thy doings. Thy way, O God, is in the sanctuary: who is so great a God as our God? (Psalm 77:11-13)

-Remember the name of the Lord.

Some trust in chariots, and some in horses: but we will remember the name of the Lord our God. They are brought down and fallen: but we are risen, and stand upright. Save, Lord: let the king hear us when we call. (Psalm 20:7-9)

-Remember how short your time on earth is.

Remember how short my time is... (Psalm 89:47)

So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom. (Psalm 90:12)

-Remember your creator in the days of your youth.

Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them. (Ecclesiastes 12:1)

-Remember His love more than wine (representing all good things).

Draw me, we will run after thee: the king hath brought me into his chambers: we will be glad and rejoice in thee, we will remember thy love more than wine: the upright love thee. (SOS 1:4)

-Remember that you must not look back to the old life.

Remember Lot's wife. (Luke 17:32)

-Remember that you are no longer alienated from God.

Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. (Ephesians 2:11-18)

-Remember that the Lord is good and His mercy endures forever.

It came even to pass, as the trumpeters and singers were as one, to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the Lord; and when they lifted up their voice with the trumpets and cymbals and instruments of musick, and praised the Lord, saying, For he is good; for his mercy endureth for ever: that then the house was filled with a cloud, even the house of the Lord; So that the priests could not stand to minister by reason of the cloud: for the glory of the Lord had filled the house of God. (2 Chronicles 5:13-14)

-Remember Him.

My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness; and my mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips: When I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee in the night watches. (Psalm 63:6)

-Remember the works of the Lord.

I will remember the works of the Lord: surely I will remember thy wonders of old. (Psalm 77:11)

CONSIDER THESE THINGS

Things the Bible tells believers to consider are another source of subjects for meditation.

-Consider that the Lord is God.

Know therefore this day, and consider it in thine heart, that the Lord he is God in heaven above, and upon the earth beneath: there is none else. (Deuteronomy 4:39)

-Consider that chastening is from the Lord.

Thou shalt also consider in thine heart, that, as a man chasteneth his son, so the Lord thy God chasteneth thee. (Deuteronomy 8:5)

-Consider the great things God has done for you.

Only fear the Lord, and serve him in truth with all your heart: for consider how great things he hath done for you. (1 Samuel 12:24)

-Consider the results of lazy, slothful behavior.

I went by the field of the slothful, and by the vineyard of the man void of understanding; And, lo, it was all grown over with thorns, and nettles had covered the face thereof, and the stone wall thereof was broken down. Then I saw, and considered it well: I looked upon it, and received instruction. Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep: So shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth; and thy want as an armed man. (Proverbs 24:30-34)

-Consider God's works.

Hearken unto this, O Job: stand still, and consider the wondrous works of God. (Job 34:14)

When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him? (Psalm 8:3-4)

And all men shall fear, and shall declare the work of God; for they shall wisely consider of his doing. (Psalm 64:9)

Consider the work of God: for who can make that straight, which he hath made crooked? In the day of prosperity be joyful, but in the day of adversity consider: God also hath set the one over against the other, to the end that man should find nothing after him. (Ecclesiastes 7:13-14)

-Consider God's Word.

The wicked have waited for me to destroy me: but I will consider thy testimonies. (Psalm 119:95)

-Consider examples from nature (for parallels of spiritual truth).

Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise: Which having no guide, overseer, or ruler, Provideth her meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest. (Proverbs 6:6-8)

Consider the ravens: for they neither sow nor reap; which neither have storehouse nor barn; and God feedeth them: how much more are ye better than the fowls? And which of you with taking thought can add to his stature one cubit? If ye then be not able to do that thing which is least, why take ye thought for the rest? Consider the lilies how they grow: they toil not, they spin not; and yet I say unto you, that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. If then God so clothe the grass, which is to day in the field, and tomorrow is cast into the oven; how much more will he clothe you, O ye of little faith? (Luke 12:24-28)

-Consider your ways.

Thus saith the Lord of hosts; Consider your ways. (Haggai 1:7)

-Consider Jesus.

Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus; Who was faithful to him that appointed him, as also Moses was faithful in all his house. (Hebrews 3:1-2)

For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds. (Hebrews 12:30)

PONDER THESE THINGS

To ponder is to consider something carefully, reflect on it, and turn it over in one's mind. The things the Bible says to ponder are good topics for meditation.

Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established. (Proverbs 4:26)

But Mary kept all these things (about Christ), and pondered them in her heart. (Luke 2:19-20)

*Once again I'll go over what God has done,
lay out on the table the ancient wonders;
I'll ponder all the things you've accomplished,
and give a long, loving look at your acts. (Psalm 77:11-12, MSG)*

THINK ON THESE THINGS

Use things the Bible says to think on as subjects for meditation.

*Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.
(Isaiah 26:3)*

*Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.
(Philippians 4:8)*

My son, pay attention to what I say; listen closely to my words. Do not let them out of your sight, keep them within your heart; for they are life to those who find them and health to a man's whole body. (Proverbs 4:20-22)

WAIT ON THE LORD

Meditation implies the act of waiting on the Lord, remaining in His presence, focused on Him and His Word:

“The word ‘wait’ means to pause for further instructions. It is not passivity; rather, we must choose to stop our actions and listen for God’s directive. He know the perfect time for us to act, and until that moment, He wants us to wait.” (Dr. Charles Stanley)

Scriptures that give commands and guidelines for waiting on the Lord are great topics for meditation. As you meditate on these Scriptures think about these things:

- Reasons to wait on the Lord.
- Difficulties of waiting on the Lord.
- Benefits of waiting on the Lord.
- How to wait on the Lord.
- When to wait on the Lord.
- What we are commanded to wait for.

Here are the key Scriptures on waiting on the Lord:

*Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors.
(Proverbs 8:34)*

*And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.
(Romans 8:23)*

*So that ye come behind in no gift; waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.
(1 Corinthians 1:7)*

*And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ.
(2 Thessalonians 3:5)*

*Yea, let none that wait on thee be ashamed: let them be ashamed which transgress without cause.
(Psalms 25:3)*

Lead me in thy truth, and teach me: for thou art the God of my salvation; on thee do I wait all the day. (Psalms 25:5)

Let integrity and uprightness preserve me; for I wait on thee. (Psalms 25:21)

Wait on the Lord: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the Lord. (Psalms 27:14)

Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him: fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way, because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass. (Psalms 37:7)

*For evildoers shall be cut off: but those that wait upon the Lord, they shall inherit the earth.
(Psalms 37:9)*

Wait on the Lord, and keep his way, and he shall exalt thee to inherit the land: when the wicked are cut off, thou shalt see it. (Psalms 37:34)

And now, Lord, what wait I for? my hope is in thee. (Psalms 39:7)

I will praise thee for ever, because thou hast done it: and I will wait on thy name; for it is good before thy saints. (Psalms 52:9)

Because of his strength will I wait upon thee: for God is my defence. (Psalms 59:9)

*My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my expectation is from him. (Psalms 62:5)
I am weary of my crying: my throat is dried: mine eyes fail while I wait for my God. (Psalms 69:3)*

These wait all upon thee; that thou mayest give them their meat in due season. (Psalms 104:27)

Behold, as the eyes of servants look unto the hand of their masters, and as the eyes of a maiden unto the hand of her mistress; so our eyes wait upon the Lord our God, until that he have mercy upon us. (Psalms 123:2)

I wait for the Lord, my soul doth wait, and in his word do I hope. (Psalms 130:5)

The eyes of all wait upon thee; and thou givest them their meat in due season. (Psalms 145:15)

But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint. (Isaiah 40:31)

The Lord is good unto them that wait for him, to the soul that seeketh him. (Lamentations 3:25)

It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord. (Lamentations 3:26)

Therefore turn thou to thy God: keep mercy and judgment, and wait on thy God continually. (Hosea 12:6)

Therefore I will look unto the Lord; I will wait for the God of my salvation: my God will hear me. (Micah 7:7)

For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry. (Habakkuk 2:3)

Therefore wait ye upon me, saith the Lord, until the day that I rise up to the prey: for my determination is to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, even all my fierce anger: for all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy. (Zephaniah 3:8)

And ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord, when he will return from the wedding; that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately. (Luke 12:36)

But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it. (Romans 8:25)

Or ministry, let us wait on our ministering: or he that teacheth, on teaching. (Romans 12:7)

For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith. (Galatians 5:5)

And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come. (1 Thessalonians 1:10)

CHAPTER ELEVEN TEST

1. Complete the following sentences listing the main categories for meditation discussed in this chapter.

R_____ these things.
C_____ these things.
P_____ these things.
T _____ on these things.
W_____ on the Lord.
2. Identify things the Bible commands Believers to remember.
3. Identify things the Bible commands Believers to consider.
4. Identify things the Bible commands Believers should ponder.
5. Study Biblical commands to wait on the Lord and write a summary of:
 - Reasons to wait on the Lord.
 - Difficulties of waiting on the Lord.
 - Benefits of waiting on the Lord.
 - How to wait on the Lord.
 - When to wait on the Lord.
 - What we are commanded to wait for.
6. Select one statement from each of the main categories which you listed in question one. Do a practice meditation on it using the Scriptures provided in this chapter. Include an outline, paraphrase, questions, and diagram.

EPILOGUE

PASSING IT ON

As you consistently follow the guidelines in this manual, you will soon realize the tremendous spiritual benefits of Biblical meditation.

Now it is your turn to share this powerful spiritual discipline with others. Use this manual as your text and pass on to others what you have learned.

And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also. (2 Timothy 2:2)

ANSWERS TO TESTS

CHAPTER ONE

1. Mantra meditation, prominent in Hindu and Buddhist religions, uses repetitive words, phrases, or sounds that claim to promote ultimate relaxation and alleviate stress. The Bible warns against vain repetitions (Matthew 6:7). Biblical meditation is not a practice of speaking, but rather of hearing from God.
2. Transcendental meditation encourages one to empty their mind instead of filling it with divinely related truth as Scripture commands. Transcendental meditation also uses original mantras, vain repetitions against which the Bible warns (Matthew 6:7).
3. Mindfulness meditation originates from Buddhist teachings. The focus is on your own thoughts as they pass through your mind, but the Bible teaches that your thoughts are not God's thoughts (Isaiah 55:8). Your thoughts come from your heart and the Bible reveals that "*The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?*" (Jeremiah 17:9). In Biblical meditation the believer fills his mind with thoughts about God, His Word, and His works.
4. Spiritual meditation is a term used in Eastern religions, such as Hinduism and Daoism. The focus is on silence and seeking a connection with any god or the universe in general. The Bible declares there is only one God and we are to worship Him (Exodus 20:1-4).
5. New Age meditation seeks to change a person's perceptions of self and the world in order to support the New Age philosophy and goals. The object is self, whereas in Biblical meditation the object is God. New Age meditation promotes altered states of consciousness, development of psychic powers, and spirit possession. These are all practices of the occult against which the Bible warns (Deuteronomy 18:10-12).
6. Focused meditation involves concentration using any of the five senses. Examples include focusing on your breathing patterns, counting beads, staring at a candle flame, etc. The focus of Biblical meditation is the Trinity of God, His works, and His Word.
7. Movement meditation is an active form of meditation involving bodily movement. Yoga is perhaps the best known form of this meditation.
8. Yoga is an ancient practice which is derived from India and is believed to be the path to spiritual growth and enlightenment. The word *yoga* means "union" or "yoking". The goal is to unite one's self with the infinite Brahman, the Hindu concept of "god" which is an impersonal spiritual substance that is one with nature and the cosmos. This is also called "pantheism," the belief that everything is God and that reality consists only of the universe and nature. The yoga philosophy makes no distinction between man and God. The various positions in yoga have spiritual meanings related to Hindu gods.

9. They appeal to the same desire that prompted the first sin of mankind: “You shall be as gods” (Genesis 3:1-6).
10. These types of meditation focus on man being in control. They advocate focusing on self instead of focusing on the Trinity of God, His works, and His Word. They emphasize centering yourself, concentrating on your inner self and bodily functions like breathing, emotions, etc. Biblical meditation is God-centered rather than self-centered. The Bible reveals that there is no good thing in mankind (Romans 7:18-19).
11. They advocate emptying the mind.
12. It is dangerous to empty the mind because it gives Satanic forces an opportunity to enter (Luke 11:24-26).
13. A believer’s mind is to be filled with:
 - The Holy Spirit: Ephesians 5:18.
 - The fulness of God: Ephesians 3:19.
 - The fruits of righteousness: Philippians 1:11.
 - Joy: Romans 15:13.
 - The knowledge of God’s will: Colossians 1:9.
 - All goodness and knowledge: Romans 15:14.
14. These meditation methods result in risks to physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual health. There have been documented cases of people losing bodily awareness, having terrible visions, and experiencing uncontrollable emotions and terror while using some of these methods.
15. These practices attempt to combine Christianity with other religiously-based rituals a practice which is forbidden by God (Deuteronomy 12:29-32).
16. Use the following verses to check your answers regarding the wrong thoughts of the fool (Psalm 14:1); the Pharisee (Luke 18:11-14); and the farmer (Luke 12:16-21).
17. Use the following Scriptures to check your summary of the results of having your mind filled with thoughts about God and His Word.
 - Psalm 94:19
 - Psalm 37:3-6
 - Proverbs 3:5-8
 - Proverbs 16:3

CHAPTER TWO

1. One Hebrew word for “meditate” is “*hagah*” which means to speak, utter, study, rehearse, and muse over something internally. A second Hebrew term is “*siyach*” which is translated “meditation” which can be either internal musings or spoken aloud. Both terms mean to ponder something until barriers to understanding have been eliminated and to return repeatedly to a subject to carefully consider it. Both involve dwelling on, thinking on, remembering, and considering the truths of God’s Word.
2. Biblical meditation involves reading, contemplating, personalizing, visualizing, and praying God’s Word. It focuses on a word or phrase and examines it from different perspectives. It is like placing the Word under a microscope instead of viewing it through a telescope. For the believer, meditation means having “*the word of Christ dwell in you richly*” (*Colossians 3:16*).
3. Review chapter two to write a summary of the quotes of:
 - Selwyn Huges
 - Robert Morgan
 - Thomas Brooks
 - A Primer On Meditation
 - Andrew Murray
 - Warren Wiersbe
 - Henry Blackaby
 - Thomas Watson
 - J.I. Packer
 - Don Whitney
 - A.W. Tozer
4. The *first purpose* of meditation is come to know God more intimately.
A *second purpose* of meditation is to come to know the voice of God.
A *third purpose* of meditation is to ponder your own spiritual condition in order to deal with personal sin, understand your strengths and weaknesses, and confront issues in your life on a Scriptural basis.
5. *...if you receive my words,
And treasure my commands within you,
So that you incline your ear to wisdom,
And apply your heart to understanding;
Yes, if you cry out for discernment,
And lift up your voice for understanding,
If you seek her as silver,
And search for her as for hidden treasures;
Then you will understand the fear of the Lord,
And find the knowledge of God.*

*For the Lord gives wisdom;
From His mouth come knowledge and understanding.
(Proverbs 2:1-6, NKJV)*

6. He said: “The strength received through this meditation was, I believe, a vital factor in bringing me through, kept by the faith to the very end.”

CHAPTER THREE

1. People who meditated in the Bible include: Adam and Eve, Isaac, David, Joshua, Jeremiah, Mary, the Ethiopian eunuch, the Bereans, and Jesus.
2. Use the subheadings in this chapter to compare your summaries to the statements on the importance of Biblical meditation:

CHAPTER FOUR

1. You can incorporate meditation into your daily routine when you wake up in the morning; during your commute; when you walk; when exercising; when you awaken at night; before bedtime; during your daily routine, anytime and anyplace.
2. Harriett Tubman explained how she continually meditated and prayed as she went about her daily tasks. “...*When I washed my face, I said ‘Oh Lord, wash me and make me clean’.* *When I took the towel to wipe my face, I cried ‘Oh Lord, wipe away my sins.’* *When I took the broom to sweep, I prayed ‘Oh Lord whatsoever sin there be in my heart, sweep it out...’*”
3. “*Brother Lawrence retreated to a place in his heart where the love of God made every detail of his life of surpassing value...Together, God and Brother Lawrence cooked meals, ran errands, scrubbed pots, and endured the scorn of the world.*”
4. Occasional meditation is spontaneously done as one goes through their day—like that described by Harriet Tubman and Brother Lawrence. It uses common events of life to consider spiritual truths, drawing spiritual parallels from natural examples. Deliberate meditation refers to setting aside a specific time for meditation.
5. Times when meditation is especially important:
 - Facing an important decision.
 - Going through financial difficulties.
 - Tragedies, such as the loss of a loved one, a divorce, and other great losses.
 - Health crises.
 - Difficult emotions.
 - Temptation.
 - Death/funerals.
 - On the Lord’s Day.
 - Preparing to minister.

- During transitions.
- Birth.
- Marriage.
- Preparing to take the Lord's Supper.

6. It is important to have a regular time for meditation because if you do not schedule a set time for something, you usually don't get around to doing it
7. Answers will vary.

CHAPTER FIVE

1. Set aside a specific time each day for meditation. Select a time where you are mentally alert. For some, this may be early morning. For others, it may be in the evening. Start with a few minutes a day and then progress to longer periods as you learn the techniques of Biblical meditation.
2. Thomas Watson:
"A Christian, when he goes to meditate, must lock up himself from the world. The world spoils meditation; Christ went by Himself into the mountainside to pray...Go into a solitary place when you are to meditate. Isaac went out to meditate in the field. He sequestered and retired himself that he might take a walk with God by meditation...When Abraham went to sacrifice, he left his servant and the donkey at the bottom of the hill. So, when a Christian is going up the hill of meditation, he should leave all secular cares at the bottom of the hill, that he may be alone."

A.W. Tozer:
"Retire from the world each day to some private spot...stay in the secret place till the surrounding noises begin to fade out of your heart and a sense of God's presence envelops you."

Dr. Charles Stanley:
"You and I are blessed and cursed with constant communication through our phones, tablets, and computers. But true communion with the Lord demands some seclusion. So let's turn off the TV, music, and phone notifications and listen for God's voice. Claim a block of time for the Heavenly Father today, even if you start with only five minutes."
3. Establish a relaxing environment; use soft Christian music; if desired, use incense and candles.
4. Silence your phone, the television, and other distractions.
 Frances Roberts:
"Silence will speak more to you in a day than the world of voices can teach you in a lifetime."

A.W. Tozer:

“Deliberately tune out the unpleasant sounds and come out of your closet determined not to hear them. Listen for the inward voice till you learn to recognize it...Call home your thoughts. Gaze on Christ with the eyes of your soul. Practice spiritual concentration.”

5. What basic supplies are needed for meditation?
 - A journal to record your meditations.
 - Pens or pencils.
 - Your Bible.
 - Different versions of the Bible.

6. Answers will vary.

CHAPTER SIX

1. Compare your summaries to the following bold-faced subheadings in chapter six:
 - I have too many responsibilities.
 - I don't have time.
 - It is too difficult.
 - I don't know how.
 - My mind wanders.
 - There are too many distractions.
 - It seems legalistic.
 - I don't have a good education.
 - I don't like trying new things.
 - I am afraid I will fail.

2. Answers will vary.

CHAPTER SEVEN

1. You most likely already know how to meditate if you have ever worried or focused on problems that consumed your thoughts. You have just meditated on the wrong things.
2. Compare your answers to the following bold-faced subheadings:
 - Quieting yourself in the presence of the Lord.
 - Praising God.
 - Praying for the Holy Spirit's help.
 - Selecting Scriptures on which to meditate.
 - Reading the passage.
 - Meditating on each word of a passage.
 - Using questions and answers.

- Using a journal to:
 - Outline the Scripture.
 - Summarize the basic truths of the passage.
 - Paraphrase the passage.
 - Visualize the passage by a drawing or diagram.
- Memorizing the passage.
- Making the passage accessible.
- Praying about the passage.
- Worshipping God.
- Applying the meditation to your life.

3. Compare your summaries to the quotations by:

-Dr. Bruce Demarest	-Thomas Manton
-A.W. Tozer	-William Bridge
-J. Vernon McGee	-George Mueller
-Vance Havner	-Dr. David Jeremiah
-Martin Luther	-William Secker
-David Shepherd	-Andrew Murray

CHAPTER EIGHT

1. Meditation on a verse: Answers will vary.
2. Meditation on a passage: Answers will vary.
3. Meditation on a topic: Answers will vary.

CHAPTER NINE

1.
 - Start with simple passages until you are familiar with the methods of meditating.
 - Select one passage instead of multiple passages when you are first starting.
 - Select practical passages that are applicable to your circumstances.
 - Chose appropriate passages.
2. Compare your answer to the list of general topics in this chapter.
3. Answers will vary.

CHAPTER TEN

1. Selah is from the Hebrew word “*calah*” which means to measure, as in weighing something in the balances. “Selah” means we should pause to carefully examine, measure, and value what has been said.
2.
 - Print out the information in Chapter Ten and put it in a notebook
 - Use different versions of the Bible to study the “Selah” verses.

- Study the “Selah” verses in the context of the chapter where they occur.
- Memorize each “Selah” verse as you study it.
- Most importantly: Be sure to “Selah” on the verses you are studying--pause and lift up the truth of the Word for meditation, reflection, and application.

3. Answers will vary.
4. Optional.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

1.
 - Remember these things.
 - Consider these things.
 - Ponder these things.
 - Think on these things.
 - Wait on the Lord.
2. Compare your answer to the subheadings under the heading: “Remember These Things”.
3. Compare your answer to the subheadings under the heading: “Consider These Things”.
4. Compare your answer to the verses listed under the heading: “Ponder These Things”.
5. Use the Scriptures under the heading: “Wait On The Lord”. Your answer should include:
 - Reasons to wait on the Lord.
 - Difficulties of waiting on the Lord.
 - Benefits of waiting on the Lord.
 - How to wait on the Lord.
 - When to wait on the Lord.
 - What we are commanded to wait for.
6. Answers will vary.

APPENDIX ONE

SCRIPTURAL INDEX

MEDITATE/MEDITATION

Genesis 24:63

And Isaac went out to meditate in the field at the eventide: and he lifted up his eyes, and saw, and, behold, the camels were coming.

Joshua 1:8

This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.

Psalms 1:1-3

How blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, Nor stand in the path of sinners, Nor sit in the seat of scoffers! But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in His law he meditates day and night. He will be like a tree firmly planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in its season and its leaf does not wither; and in whatever he does, he prospers.

Psalms 4:4

Stand in awe, and sin not: commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still. Selah.

Psalms 5:1

...Give ear to my words, O Lord, consider my meditation.

Psalms 16:7

I will bless the Lord who has counseled me; Indeed, my mind instructs me in the night.

Psalms 19:14

Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength, and my redeemer.

Psalms 49:3

My mouth shall speak of wisdom; and the meditation of my heart shall be of understanding.

Psalms 63:5-6

My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness; and my mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips: When I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee in the night watches.

Psalms 77:12

I will meditate also of all thy work, and talk of thy doings.

Psalm 94:19

In the multitude of my thoughts within me thy comforts delight my soul.

Psalms 104:34

My meditation of him shall be sweet: I will be glad in the Lord.

Psalm 119:15-16

I will meditate on Your precepts and regard Your ways. I shall delight in Your statutes; I shall not forget Your word.

Psalms 119:23

Princes also did sit and speak against me: but thy servant did meditate in thy statutes.

Psalms 119:48

My hands also will I lift up unto thy commandments, which I have loved; and I will meditate in thy statutes.

Psalms 119:78

Let the proud be ashamed; for they dealt perversely with me without a cause: but I will meditate in thy precepts.

Psalms 119:97

O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day.

Psalms 119:99

I have more understanding than all my teachers: for thy testimonies are my meditation.

Psalms 119:148

Mine eyes prevent the night watches, that I might meditate in thy word.

Psalms 143:5

I remember the days of old; I meditate on all thy works; I muse on the work of thy hands.

Psalm 145:5

On the glorious splendor of Your majesty and on Your wonderful works, I will meditate.

Luke 2:19

But Mary treasured all these things, pondering them in her heart.

Philippians 4:8

Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things.

1 Timothy 4:15

Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all.