

Spiritual Discipline: Bible Meditation

Eastern meditation is an attempt to empty the mind; Christian meditation is an attempt to fill the mind.

Misconceptions:

- Eastern Meditation focuses on _____ from the world. This is a piece, but we must go on to _____.
- It is too difficult, too complicated. Thomas Merton: Meditation is really very _____ and there is not much need of elaborate techniques to teach us how to go about it.
- View contemplation as impractical and wholly out of touch with the 21st Century.
- Most common of all is to view meditation as a religious form of _____.
- More closely associated with yoga, transcendental meditation, relaxation therapy, or some New Age practice.

Truth:

- Meditation is _____ by God and _____ by the godly in scripture.
- Not complete mental _____, but biblical meditation involves filling your mind with God and His truth.
- Imagination is our _____ to help us meditate on things that are true (Phil. 4:8)

_____: deep thinking on the truths and spiritual realities revealed in Scripture, or upon life from a scriptural perspective, for the purposes of understanding, application, and prayer.

Failure to _____ is the reason why many fail to remember or find their hearts warmed by the fire of God's word. Thomas Watson: The reason we come away so cold from reading the word is because we do not warm ourselves at the fire of meditation.

Meditating on Scripture is letting the Bible _____ in the brain.

Reading the Bible tells the believer of God's love. Meditation is more likely to convince him or her of it personally and, in biblically appropriate ways, to cause a person to _____ loved by God.

Joshua 1:8 and the Promise of Success

Joshua 1:8 – meditate... good success...

Psalms 1:1-3 – The promises

"They usually thrive best who meditate most." – Robbie

Result of meditation: stability, fruitfulness, perseverance, and prosperity.

Many Christians are exposed to lots of teaching, instructions and read the Bible. But without absorbing some of the water of the Word of God they encounter, we will be little better for the contact. Meditation is _____ of the Scriptures. Hearing and reading the Bible is the exposure to Scripture, and it is needed, but it is only the starting place.

George Muller: The simple reading of the Word of God can become information that only passes through our minds, just as water runs through a pipe.

James 1:25 The New Testament Promises

Promise is not for someone who just looks into the law as a casual reader. The promise is for the one who looks intently. The opposite of a meditator is a "_____." Boom.

Effective hearer results in an effective doer. This is the vision... Christlikeness. The _____: Meditation is a means to an end. The end is godliness.

HOW DO WE MEDITATE CHRISTIANLY?

Select an Appropriate Passage:

Start with a verse, phrase, or word that impresses on you from the readings from the day. One of the most consistently profitable ways to select a passage for meditation is to discern the main message of the section of your encounter with the Scripture and meditate on its meaning and application.

General Rule: Dive into passages from your personal, daily intake of Scripture. Read _____, meditate _____.

SELECT A METHOD OF MEDITATION

It is not daydreaming where we let our minds wander. It is meditation where we focus our thoughts.

It is not mental aimlessness. Your mind is on track, going somewhere. It has direction.

Meditation Method #1: Emphasize Different Words in the Text

John 11:25: "I am the resurrection and the life."

Meditation Method #2: Rewrite the Text in Your Own Words

Journal!

Meditation Method #3: Formulate a Principle from the Text-What does it teach?

This makes it helpful to reproduce with others.

Meditation Method #4: Think of an Illustration of the Text – What Picture Explains It?

Meditation Method #5: Look for Application of the Text

Meditation Method #6: Ask How the Text Points to the Law of the Gospel

Meditation Method #7: Ask How the Text Points to Something about Jesus

Meditation Method #8: Ask What Question is Answered or What Problem is Solved by the Text

Meditation Method #9: Pray Through the Text

Meditation Method #10: Memorize the Text

Meditation Method #11: Create an Artistic Expression of the Text

Meditation Method #12: Ask the Philippians 4:8 Questions of the Text

- What is true about this, or what truth does it exemplify?
- What is honorable about this?
- What is just or right about this?
- What is pure about this, or how does it exemplify purity?
- What is lovely about this?
- What is commendable about this?
- What is excellent about this?
- What is praiseworthy about this?

Meditation Method #13: Ask the Joseph Hall Questions of the Text

Wrote The Art of Divine Meditation, 1574-1656

1. What is it (Define and/or describe what it is) you are meditating upon?
2. What are its divisions or parts?
3. What causes it?
4. What does it cause; that is, what are its fruits and effects?
5. What is its place, location, or use?
6. What are its qualities and attachments?
7. What is contrary, contradictory, or different to it?
8. What compares to it?
9. What are its titles or names?
10. What are testimonies or examples of Scripture about it?

Meditation Method #14: Set and Discover a Minimum Number of Insights from the Text

Meditation Method #15: Find a Link or Common Thread Between All the Paragraphs or Chapters You Read

Meditation Method #16: Ask How the Text Speaks to your Current Issue or Question

Meditation Method #17: Use Meditation Mapping

Read _____ (if necessary) to _____ more.

Jonathan Edwards soon after his conversion:

I seemed often to see so much light exhibited by every sentence, and such a refreshing food communicated, that I could not get along in reading; often dwelling long on one sentence to see the wonders contained in it, and yet almost every sentence seemed to be full of wonders.