

Biblical Meditation

Key Verse:

*"Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked
or stand [passively] in the way of sinners or sit in the seat of mockers.
But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on His law,
he meditates day and night.
He is like a tree firmly planted by streams of water,
which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither.
Whatever he does prospers."
Ps 1:1-3 (see also Jer. 17:7-8)*

Portion for the Journey:

Psalm 1:1-3: These first verses of the Psalms call us to meditate on His Word and include amazing promises for those who meditate in His Word:

He is like a tree [from the idea of its firmness]
firmly planted [flourishing vine placed in an ideal location]
by streams of water [abundant and never-failing waters, fresh and pure],
which yields its fruit in season [continually, always, especially at eventide]
and whose leaf does not wither [fade or fall away].
Whatever he does prospers [break out or come mightily, flourish]."

Joshua 1:8: The Lord gives Joshua his marching orders for successfully leading Israel to possess the Promised Land. *"This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have success."* See **Joshua 1:5-9** (NASB)

1 Tim 4:15-16 Paul's charge to Timothy are very similar to those Joshua received! "Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all. Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee."

The NASB translates v. 16 to say, "Pay close attention to yourself and to your teaching; persevere in these things, for as you do this you will ensure salvation both for yourself and for those who hear you."

Scriptural References to meditation in the Old Testament: Note the focus of the meditation is on understanding God's Word and on knowing God Himself and His works and ways. David was one who frequently meditated upon God's Word and who spoke of the delight that he found in God's word. There is an element of close fellowship and adoration of the LORD in these passages.

Psalm 27:4 One thing I have asked from the LORD, that I shall seek: That I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, To behold the beauty of the LORD And to meditate in His temple.

Psalm 63:5-8 When I remember You on my bed, I meditate on You in the night watches...

Psalm 77:6 I will remember my song in the night; I will meditate with my heart, And my spirit ponders...

Psalm 77:12 I will meditate on all Your work And muse on Your deeds.

Psalm 119:15 I will meditate on Your precepts And regard Your ways.

Psalm 119:27 Make me understand the way of Your precepts, So I will meditate on Your wonders.

Psalm 119:48 And I shall lift up my hands to Your commandments, Which I love; And I will meditate on Your statutes.

Psalm 119:78 ...But I shall meditate on Your precepts.

Psalm 119:148 My eyes anticipate the night watches, That I may meditate on Your word.

Psalm 143:5 I remember the days of old; --I meditate on all Your doings; I muse on the work of Your hands.

Psalm 145:5 On the glorious splendor of Your majesty & on Your wonderful works, I will meditate.

"Meditation upon the Word of God is one of the most important of all the means of grace and growth in spirituality; yea, there can be no true progress in vital and practical godliness without it. Meditation on divine things is not optional but obligatory, for it is something that God has commanded us to attend unto. The order that Joshua received was not restricted to himself but is addressed to all of God's people. Nor does it by any means stand alone. "Set your hearts unto all the words which I testify among you this day" (Deut 32:46). "Ponder the path of thy feet" (Pro 4:26); "Consider your ways" (Hag 1:7). "Let these sayings sink down into your ears" (Luke 9:44) "Whatsoever things are true, honorable, just, pure, lovely...think on these things" (Phil 4:8). It is a holy art and habit commended in the practice and example of the saints: Isaac (Gen 24:62), David (Ps 119), the mother of our Lord (Luke 1:19, 51). But though meditation be a duty and a great moral and spiritual aid, it is practiced by few. The usual plea proffered by those who neglect it is, I am too busy... Then you are acting in the energy of the flesh and suffering yourself to be little better than a slave. God is no Egyptian taskmaster. Christ's yoke is easy and His burden is light; and if your "burden" be heavy, it is a self-imposed one. God calls you to no manner of life that crowds out the needs of your soul and entails the neglect of your eternal interests."

~~A. W. Pink

Digging Deeper in the Word

Understanding the Biblical Meditation

1. **What Biblical Meditation is not:** Biblical meditation should not be confused with pagan forms of meditation used by the eastern mystics or yoga!! These forms of meditation are counterfeits and are diametrically opposed to the meditation described in the Word of God. Eastern meditation stresses the need to become detached from reality, empty the mind, and open oneself up to whatever influences enter the heart. **These are the opposite of God's way which is to have us very mentally alert, wide awake, open to listen to the Holy Spirit, discerning and understanding. We are actively involved spiritually, mentally and physically in the process of receiving His Word.**

2. **Broad Definition of Meditation:** Biblical Meditation is one form of receiving the Word which has been much neglected and rarely taught within the Church. God wants us to engage/activate in our minds to think carefully and ponder His Word. There are many different ways to study the Word of God and we can incorporate a combination of any or all of these as we undertake to meditate on His Word.

These include hearing the Word, writing the Word, reading the Word, singing the Word, using an established Bible reading plan, Bible Study of particular topics, books or characters.

Meditation is the devotional practice in which we carefully consider the words of a verse or verses with an open, listening heart and allow the Holy Spirit to take the written word and apply it as living word to our innermost being. Campbell McAlpine, defined it this way: “Meditation is the practice of pondering, considering, and reflection on verses of scripture in total dependence on the Holy Spirit to give revelation of truth and meaning, and by obedient response and reception of that word, having it imparted to the inner being. The importation of such truth brings life and light to the meditator, as a result of coming with the attitude of humility, trust and obedience. Meditation is inwardly receiving truth. It is feeding on Christ, Living Bread and Living Word.

Some have described meditation on the Word as the “digestive faculty of the soul.” It is likened to a cow carefully chewing its grass and then returning to it again as it ruminates on the cud! In this way, every bit of nutrition is derived from each mouthful! Jeremiah wrote, “Thy words were found and I did eat them and Thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart.” ([Jer. 15:16](#)) Jesus said, “The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life.” [John 6:63](#)

The word **meditate** is taken from the Latin root word, medicalus, from which we get our word ‘medicine’, and medicine, we know, never does any good in the bottle, it has to be taken internally, normally three times a day!”

The purpose of meditation is always to seek the Lord and to hear what He is speaking to our hearts. When we meditate on the WORD, God is able to share His heart with us. He releases His burdens and His strategies through His Word. We do not lean on our own understanding of what words mean: We may look up the meanings of words in a dictionary or Strong’s Concordance, or examine cross references or follow a specific topic into other verses. The result is impartation of Divine Truth which comes to us as rhema. It should always bring a response on our part back to God.

A number of different Hebrew words are used to define “meditation.” Each of these definitions that our Bibles translate “meditate or meditation” reflect characteristics of Biblical Meditation that will help us understand it better.

- The first usage of the word ‘meditate’ in our English Bibles is found in [Genesis 24:26](#) “*And Isaac went out to **meditate** and bow down [in prayer] in the open country in the evening.*”

This Hebrew word for meditate is used only in this passage. The Hebrew word **SUAH** (H7742) means, ‘to meditate, to muse pensively [with serious thoughtfulness]; a contemplation [in which the mind is directed with consideration and attention, to keep at the forefront of one’s mind.] This verse contains a principle of Biblical meditation which is that meditation is always combined with prayer and bowing down in worship! The heart focused on seeking the LORD in His Word should be moved to respond to Him in prayer and worship! The context of this particular verse also provides rich food for meditation. Isaac had just come from the well of Beer-Lahai-Roi which means ‘a well to the Living One who sees me.’ As he meditated, he looked up and saw camels approaching. These camels were bearing his bride!

- “*The LORD is my light and my salvation— whom shall I fear? The LORD is the stronghold of my life— of whom shall I be afraid? When evil men advance against me to devour my flesh, when*

*my enemies and my foes attack me, they will stumble and fall. Though an army besiege me, my heart will not fear; though war break out against me, even then will I be confident. **One thing I ask of the LORD, this is what I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of the LORD and to **meditate** in his temple. For in the day of trouble he will keep me safe in his dwelling; he will hide me in the shelter of his tabernacle and set me high upon a rock. Then my head will be exalted above the enemies who surround me; at his tabernacle will I sacrifice with shouts of joy; I will sing and make music to the LORD.” Ps 27:1-6***

The Hebrew word for meditate or seek that is used in this passage is **BAQAR** which means to plough, to break forth, i.e., inspect, admire, care for, consider, make inquiry, make diligent search, or seek out. This definition contains many of the characteristics we want to have when we begin to meditate upon a particular passage of scripture. It speaks of a hungry heart that is willing to dig deeply to seek out the richness of the treasure in God's Word. You dig into the Word, go below the surface, seek beyond your present level of understanding. When we meditate on the WORD, we exhibit a tenacity to plumb the depths, to dwell upon the WORD until it has revealed all the treasure we can find.

- Another Hebrew word for meditate is **HAH-GAH** (used in the **Psalm 1:1-3** and **Joshua 1:1-9**) this word is defined as "ponder, study, to muse, to speak, to praise, to whisper." It describes both the cooing of a dove and the growling of a lion that has trapped its prey. Thus, inherent in the idea of meditation is both the dove-like heart that quiets itself before the Lord to seek understanding, and the lion-like hunger that will not let go until you have feasted upon the full contents of the word.
- **Psalm 119:97,99** use the Hebrew word **SIHA** means to meditate with the idea of reflection and devotion, it is used to describe pious meditation for the purpose of prayer. In current usage, pious carries a rather negative connotation. Webster's 1828 Dictionary defines it as, "Godly; reverencing and honoring the Supreme Being in heart and in the practice of the duties he has enjoined; having due veneration and affection for the character of God, and habitually obeying his commands; religious; devoted to the service of God; applied to persons."
- Paul instructed Timothy to "*give himself wholly and completely, to immerse himself in the Word*" and to continue in the teachings of God. The Greek word for **meditate** in the 1 Timothy 4:15 passage is **MELETAŌ** means to take care for, to revolve or resolve in the mind and it comes from a root that means literally "it matters" or 'to be of great interest or concern. The word "continue" means to remain, persevere, abide, or tarry. This word comes from a root which means to stay in a given place, state or expectancy. It speaks of an abiding, enduring, dwelling in which we stand or tarry before the Lord in His Word.

THE BLESSED BENEFITS OF BIBLICAL MEDITATION

1. **The primary purpose for Biblical Meditation is intimacy with God.** Meditation on God's Word allows us to draw close to the Lord in intimate communication and develop relationship with Him. It is through our times of meditation in God's Word that He brings us into His secret counsel. He shares with us things that we can know in no other way and teaches us how to pray according to His will, His plans and His purposes. We begin to receive His perspective on situations rather than our own. It is through meditation that He takes His desires and makes them our desires, to bring us into agreement with His word and His ways. **Jer. 33:3**

Rev 3:20-22 Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and sup with him, and he with me. To him who overcomes, I will give the right to sit with me on my throne, just as I overcame and sat down with my Father on his throne. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.”

The word "sup" contains many of the aspects to be found in meditation. If you look up the meaning of "sup" you will find that it is to dine with or take the principal evening meal or feast. The evening meal was the most important meal of the day-- it was a time of nourishment but more importantly a time of friendship and fellowship. This meal was customarily taken in a very leisurely manner with the members of the family sitting or lying around a low table. We see this meal greatly exemplified in Jesus Last Supper with His disciples. It is a time to be fed of His Spirit and enjoy our friendship with Him. The Lord is calling His people to enter into a Sabbath rest from their own works and to enter into His inner chamber, the Holy of Holies, the Secret Place of the Most High.

2. **Meditation provides us with rich spiritual nutrition!** God’s Word is frequently described in terms of food. Jesus is the Bread of Life! Meditation allows us to receive fresh manna from the LORD on a daily basis. It brings us fresh revelation from the Lord. His Word is living and always life-changing when we allow it to penetrate our hearts with a view towards obedient response.

Psalms 119:103 “How sweet are Your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth!”

Exodus 16:15-18 “This is the bread which the Lord hath given you to eat...gather it every man according to his eating...he that gathered much had nothing over, he that gathered little had no lack; they gathered every man according to his eating.”

Matthew 4:4 “Jesus answered, ‘It is written: “Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.”’

1 Peter 2:2 “As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:”

1 Cor 3:1-2 “HOWEVER, BRETHREN, I could not talk to you as to spiritual [men], but as to nonspiritual [men of the flesh, in whom the carnal nature predominates], as to mere infants [in the new life] in Christ [unable to talk yet!] I fed you with milk, not solid food, for you were not yet strong enough [to be ready for it]; but even yet you are not strong enough [to be ready for it]...” (AMP)

Jeremiah 15:16 “Your words were found, and I ate them, and your words became to me a joy and the delight of my heart, for I am called by your name, O Lord, God of hosts.”

Isaiah 55:1-2 “Come, all you who are thirsty, come to the waters; and you who have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without cost. Why spend money on what is not bread, and your labor on what does not satisfy? Listen, listen to me, and eat what is good, and your soul will delight in the richest of fare.”

3. **God's Word gives us life!** In [Psalm 119:50](#), David said, 'This is my comfort in my affliction, for Your Word has given me life.' Jesus said, "It is the Spirit who gives life, the flesh profits nothing. The Words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life." [John 6:63](#) The critical message in these passages is that we need to know and live God's Word. We cannot live without it. Peter tells us, "And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts." [2 Peter 1:19](#)
4. **We learn to listen and recognize His voice.** There is a verse in [Deuteronomy 6:4-5](#) "*Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the Lord is one! And you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.*" This verse is called the "SHEMA" and formed the basic confession of faith in Judaism. Shema, the Hebrew word for "hear," means to hear intelligently with the implication of attentiveness and obedience, to carefully and diligently consider or hearken to the words which are spoken. The Shema was recited as a prayer morning and night, calling the people to uncompromising worship of God alone, and a total love commitment. This verse really calls us back to the simplicity and purity of devotion to Jesus and to return to our first love relationship with the Lord. [2 Cor. 11:3](#)
5. **Biblical Meditation develops a firm root in our lives.** It is in this place of quiet before the Lord, in our times of meditation in His word and in fellowship with Him that our firm root in Jesus is established. This is the place of perfect security and trust no matter what is happening in the world around us. It is vital that we hear and respond to His warnings and to receive the provision that He has made for us in these last days.

The Word of God is that firm foundation which cannot be shaken. Jesus said in [Matt. 7:24-27](#) "Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash." See also [Heb. 12:26-29](#); [Matt. 13:6,21](#)

6. **Meditation brings great peace and rest to our souls.** W. H. Griffith Thomas offered these insights on Biblical Meditation: "The first result of hiding God's Word in our heart is spiritual peace. "Great peace have they which love Thy law, and nothing shall cause them to stumble." ([Psalm 119:165](#)) It is one of the most familiar facts of Christian experience that our inner peace is in exact proportion to our meditation on God's Word, the hiding of God's Word in our heart, and it is natural that it is through the Word that we come to know God. In proportion as we come to know Him, we come to understand His will, and, with this, more and more of the fullness of His revelation in Christ Jesus. The outcome is peace. If, as we look back upon the last year, we are conscious that there has been an absence, to any extent, of this peace in our life, we may almost certainly put it down to the fact we have not been too familiar with God through His Word, that we have not been often enough face to face with Him through His Word. "They that know their God shall be strong," and we can only know God through His Word. "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God." And peace, too, cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God." "Life abiding and Abounding: Bible studies in prayer and meditation" W. H. Griffith Thomas (1861-1924)

7. **Biblical Meditation gives us insight and direction for prayer and intercession.** It is a very practical tool to help us understand the things that are on His heart so we can learn how to pray as we ought. In **Ephesians 6:17** we are instructed to “take up...the sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God.” The word used for “word” in this passage is *rhema* which is the Word of God spoken or revealed to us by His Spirit. **Rev. 1:16; Heb. 4:12**
8. **Meditation increases our focus on God’s Word.** The enemy creates fires to cause distraction. When we seek the LORD and allow Him to direct our prayers through His Word, we are given the ability to focus on His heart and His priorities. The enemy seeks to keep us running from crisis to crisis rather than engaging in sustained prayer for things that are a priority to God.
9. **Meditation is a very valuable tool for prayer groups.** Biblical meditation will bring a group into unity as they wait upon the Lord to receive His direction for prayer. You will find that the Lord gives to each person a portion of the whole message and as we put our “pieces” together we will get a picture of the whole. As we share the insights each of us has received from our time of meditation, certain points will be emphasized over and over, these are themes that we know are very important. Each person will receive something that is valuable. Our maturity in the Lord, “experience” etc. are of no difference. Each person can be responsible to turn their particular portion of the meditation into prayer. See handouts: “Suggestions for Group Prayer and Meditation in the Word” and
10. **Meditation prepares our hearts for prayer and is an excellent foundation for Biblical warfare!** It is through our times of meditating in God’s Word that He brings us into His secret counsel. He shares with us things that we can know in no other way and teaches us how to pray according to His will, His plans and His purposes. We begin to receive His perspective to situations rather than our own. It is through meditation that He takes His desires and makes them our desires, to bring us into agreement with His word and His ways

Prov. 24:6 “For by wise counsel thou shalt make thy war: and in multitude of counselors there is safety.” The Hebrew words used in the phrase “make war” implies “a well thought out plan”, carefully constructed, involving careful preparation in order to accomplish the purposes intended. Thus, when moving in spiritual warfare we desire to seek the Lord and meditate upon His Word, to pray according to His plan.

Ps. 119:97-99 “O how I love thy law! It is my meditation all the day. Thou through thy commandments hast made me wiser than my enemies: for they are ever with me. I have more understanding than all my teachers: for thy testimonies are my meditation.”

Practical Application for Biblical Meditation

1. **Come to Him with an actively seeking heart:** “If you seek Me, you will find Me” “It is the glory of God to conceal a matter, But the glory of kings is to search out a matter.” **Proverbs 25:2** God’s Word is veiled to those who do not believe, but Jesus told His disciples that to them was given to know the mysteries of the Kingdom. From the beginning, God has shown Himself as One who seeks to reveal Himself and bring man into relationship with Him. We need to come to the Word of God

to seek to know Him and to understand His ways! He is a rewarder of all who truly seek Him. [John 5:39-40](#); [Job 5:8](#); [Isa. 45:19](#) [Isa 51:1](#); [Jer. 29:13](#); [Prov. 8:17](#)

W. H. Griffith Thomas wrote regarding Biblical Meditation, *"God's thoughts are not revealed to listless readers, but only to eager searchers. The glories of the Scriptures are not to be discovered without diligent search. The Bible is like a mine, its jewels are not picked up on the roadside...its words, phrases and sentences are full of meaning and power... The Bible at once conceals and reveals its message..."* ~Methods of Bible Study, W. H. Griffith Thomas (1902)

2. **Draw Apart:** *"But you, when you pray, go into your inner room, close your door and pray to your Father who is in secret, and your Father who sees what is done in secret will reward you."* [Matt. 6:6](#)

Set apart a time to be alone with the Lord. Ideally, this is a time in which you are unhurried and can relax in His presence to receive instruction at His feet. This is extremely difficult but so vital to our continued relationship with Jesus. Jesus often withdrew to a solitary place for a time of fellowship with God. He calls us to come apart, separate ourselves from the noise and confusion of the world. Close our door to distractions and take time to sit at His feet. A. W. Pink stated, "If we would see God, we must get out of the crowd of worldly business." This precious time with the LORD can take place under less than perfect circumstances! Susannah Wesley, mother of 19 children would put her apron over her head in the midst of a houseful of children to spend time with the LORD! If it is important to us, we can find a way! [Luke 10:42](#); [Matt. 14:13, 23](#); [Song of Songs 1:4, 2:4](#); [Rev. 3:20-22](#); [Matt. 11:28-30](#)

St. Bernard, when he came to the church door, used to say, "Stay here all my worldly thought that I may converse with God in the temple."

~~St. Bernard, a French reformer known for his devotion. 1090-1153

3. **Draw near to God.** James 4:8 gives us this amazing promise, that when we draw near to God and He will draw near to us. We are invited by the Most High God to come into His presence. We should be consciously aware of approaching His Throne. *"Let us then fearlessly and confidently and boldly draw near to the throne of grace (the throne of God's unmerited favor to us sinners), that we may receive mercy [for our failures] and find grace to help in good time for every need [appropriate help and well-timed help, coming just when we need it]."* [Heb. 4:16](#) (AMP)

"Let us all come forward and draw near with true (honest and sincere) hearts in unqualified assurance and absolute conviction engendered by faith (by that leaning of the entire human personality on God in absolute trust and confidence in His power, wisdom, and goodness), having our hearts sprinkled and purified from a guilty (evil) conscience and our bodies cleansed with pure water." [Hebrews 10:22](#) (AMP)

4. **Approach Him with Joy.** *"Enter His gates with Thanksgiving in your heart." "Thou wilt show me the path of life: In thy presence is fulness of joy; In thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore."* [Ps. 16:11](#)

Come with a heart that delights in the presence of Lord and in His Word. "Delight yourself in the Lord and He will give you the desires of your heart." [Ps. 37:4](#) Rejoice and welcome His Spirit in your midst. Enter

His gates with thanksgiving and enter His courts with praise!! Jer. 15:16; Isa. 26:8-9; Prov. 2:1-5; 1 Chr. 16:27; Ps. 21:6; Acts 2:28; Gal. 5:22 (Amp); Jude 1:24

5. Ask God for His Spirit of wisdom and revelation. When we meditate, we do not rely on our own understanding, but seek understanding from the Lord. We come to Him with a sense of total and complete dependence upon His Spirit. **James 1:5** promises, *"If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him."* Jesus said, *"The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing. The words I have spoken to you are spirit and they are life."* **John 6:63**

Apart from the Holy Spirit shedding light on the Word, we can truly not understand anything spiritual. As you begin your time of meditation you can join David in praying, *"Incline my heart unto Thy testimonies...give me understanding that I may learn Thy commandments...order my steps in Thy Word. That which I see not, teach me...and write Thy word upon my heart that I might not sin against Thee."* Pray for the leading of the Spirit, stand against your own ideas, and the voice of the enemy. Receive His leading by faith. **Prov 2:1-5** *"My son, IF you accept my words and store up my commands within you, turning your ear to wisdom and applying your heart to understanding, and IF you call out for insight and cry aloud for understanding, and if you look for it as for silver and search for it as for hidden treasure, THEN you will understand the fear of the LORD and find the knowledge of God."* **Prov. 2:4-5; Ps. 119:11, 36, 73, 133; Job 34:32; Prov. 7:3; James 4:8; James 1:5; Jer 33:3; John 6:63**

6. Trust and expect Him to speak to you. *"My sheep hear My voice."* If you are Jesus' little lamb, you will hear His voice. **Deut. 33:3** *"Indeed he loves the people, All Thy holy ones are in Thy hand, and they followed in Thy steps; everyone receives of Thy Words."* Trust and expect Him to speak to you. When beginning to meditate, do not be afraid you will "do it" wrong or not hear the LORD. By being obedient to do it, you will find the LORD speaking more and more clearly as you continue to return to the Word in your quiet time with the LORD. **Deut. 33:3; John 10:27; Heb. 11:6; John 15:15**

7. We do not follow formulas or recipes. God is creative and meditation is both an art and a science, not dogmatic. God does not want us to presume or use the same strategies in prayer that were effective once. Note example of David, whose wives, children and belongings had been taken by the enemy. He strengthened himself in the Lord and asked Him if they should pursue. He did not assume or presume in his flesh. He got his instruction on pursuing the enemy. When a similar situation presented it later, he did not presume to follow the same instructions, again he sought the LORD and the LORD gave him different instructions and strategy the next time.

8. Ask the Lord to help you select a portion of scripture for you meditation. Knowing where to start is often the most difficult part of Biblical Meditation. In **2 Tim. 2:15** (AMP) Paul instructed Timothy *"Study and be eager and do your utmost to present yourself to God approved (tested by trial), a workman who has no cause to be ashamed, correctly analyzing and accurately dividing [rightly handling and skillfully teaching] the Word of Truth."*

The Holy Spirit will often direct you to a passage. It is best to take only a verse or small passage as your selection for meditation. Remember, you are not looking for quantity but depth and quality of understanding.

Charles Spurgeon said, regarding Biblical meditation, "He is not the best student who reads the most books, but he who meditates upon them. He shall not learn most of divinity who hearts the greatest

number of sermons, but he who meditates the most devotedly on what he hears. Nor shall so profound a scholar who takes down ponderous volumes one after the other, as he who reading little by little, precept upon precept and line upon line, digests what he reads and assimilates each sentiment to his heart by meditation, receiving the Word first in his understanding and afterwards receiving the spirit of it into his own soul.”

A.W. Pink stated, “... you will derive more benefit from a single Scripture read slowly and prayerfully and duly meditated upon than you will from 10 chapters read hurriedly!” It is best to take only a verse or small passage as your selection for meditation. Remember, it is not how many pages you read, but that you have delved deeply to receive understanding or deeper revelation than a surface reading allows.

Suggestions for choosing a passage to meditate upon:

- **A book or chapter of the Bible:** The Lord may have you systematically meditate through a book or chapter of the Bible, taking one or two verses a day.
- **Word Studies:** Choose a topic that is pertinent to something you are facing in your life or have a desire to study. e.g. Fear, thanksgiving, courage
- **Meditate on a verse that you are drawn to in your daily reading.** While reading the Bible, a verse or verses may become alive to you and you find a desire to meditate on those verses in order to linger and go deeper. The idea is to have a watchful readiness to tarry over a verse and to plumb its depths.
- **Meditate on the great prayers, songs of worship or instructions** given by God for His people in His Word. Prayers recorded in the scriptures have the same power they had in the day they were first spoken! We can learn how to pray by studying the prayers of our LORD and His saints. [Matt. 6:9-13; John 17; Rom. 15:5-6; Rom. 15:13; Eph. 1:15-21; Eph. 3:14-21; Eph. 6: 18-20; Phil. 1:3-4; Phil. 1:9-11; Col. 1:9-14; 1 Thes. 2:11-13; 1 Thes. 5:23-24; 2 Thes. 1:11-12; 2 Thes. 2:16-17; 2 Thes. 3:5; 1 Tim. 6:13-16; Philemon 1:4-6](#)
- **Names and character traits of God:** God has given us His Covenant names by which we can know Him. Meditation on these names promises that we will be strong and do mighty exploits. It deepens our trust in the Lord and releases praise and worship. See how many different names of God you can find in [Psalm 18](#) (i.e., the LORD is my strength, my rock, my fortress, my deliverer, etc.)
- **The parables in the New Testament** are a rich source for meditation in His Word. Jesus used parables throughout His teaching ministry to communicate significant truths in a simple way. “All these things Jesus spoke to the multitude in parables; and without a parable He did not speak to them, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying: ‘I will open My mouth in parables; I will utter things kept secret from the foundation of the world.” [Matt. 13:34, 35](#) (See “The Parables of Jesus” handout)
- He also speaks to us as we **meditate on His creation**. His Word gives us many visual illustrations to give us greater understanding of Him and His ways. For example, He says to consider the way of the ant and to look to the heavens to see His glory. He gives us practical ways to understand spiritual principles through common experiences of life, gardening, baking bread, giving your pet dogs crumbs from the table, the shepherd and his sheep. [Prov. 6:6-11; Ps. 19:1](#)

9. There are many **tools you can use to assist you through a meditation process**. You don’t need to use all of these techniques at the same time. But it is recommended to learn how to use each of these tools to enhance your meditations.

- **You can read the passage aloud** (or if you are in a group, take turns reading the verse.) Read it again to yourself until one part (word, theme, verse) begins to draw your attention. Reading a verse multiple times with a listening ear allows it to really sink into your spirit.
- While examining the passage or chapter, **look for key words** such as: action words, nouns, and repeated words or phrases.
- In addition to the words, **allow yourself to be challenged by the descriptions, analogies or imagery** the passage is presenting. For example, reference to God as a Shepherd, a Great Light, King, or Lamb. Reflect deeply on this scripture, take time to really think about the verse.
- Be sure to **examine each word or verse in the context of the surrounding verses**. Be careful when meditating upon a verse not to take it out of context with the rest of the passage or other portions of scripture. This protects you from taking a verse out of context.
- Look up the verse in **different versions or translations** of the Bible. It is helpful to compare several different translations and compare the nuances that you will find in each one. The original languages of Hebrew and Greek have many shades of meaning than any single translation is able to convey. You can make your own amplified meaning of the verse by combining the words used in various translations.
- **Use a concordance or dictionary** to understand the meaning of the words being examined. A Strong's or Young's Concordance, Vine's Expository, or a Hebrew-Greek Lexicon will allow you to understand the meaning of the word in the original Greek or Hebrew. The Webster's 1828 Dictionary is an excellent dictionary. The Hebrew and Greek words are often rich with meaning that is lost in our English translations or we may only partially understand the meaning of a word from our point of reference. Do not assume you know what a word means. R.A. Torrey says that even when you are pretty sure you think you know what a word means, look it up! (Remember that the Old Testament is Hebrew and the New Testament is Greek.)
- **Cross References:** Most study Bibles have cross references in the margins beside each verse. Taking the time to look up the cross references often expands and provides deeper understanding of the verse at hand. The Lord may also suggest companion verses in order to deepen your understanding. Be flexible and willing to go where you feel the Lord is leading you.
- **Concordance:** When doing a topical study, use a concordance to make a list of the verses where this particular word appears. Look up each verse and meditate on what each verse has to teach you about the particular topic according to the leading of the Lord. Example: Fear of the Lord
- **Watch for the symbols and types:** A type is a "prophetic symbol" which are representations of something yet to be revealed. More specifically, a type in Old Testament is a person or thing that foreshadows a person or thing in the New Testament. When we meditate it is very useful to ask ourselves—WHY DID GOD RECORD THAT FOR US? In reference to the account of the Israelites in the Old Testament, 1 Cor 10:1-12 tells, "Now these things happened as examples for us... Now these things happened to them as an example, and they were written for our instruction, upon whom the ends of the ages have come. Therefore, let him who thinks he stands take heed that he does not fall." In John 3:14, Jesus referred to the bronze serpent that Moses lifted up to bring healing to the people as a representation of His being lifted up on the cross.
- **Commentaries:** Commentaries are excellent sources of insight and background information but should always be consulted after you have gained everything you can yourself. It is easy to become reliant on commentaries and lose the benefits of letting the Holy Spirit reveal His Truth to you directly. See John 4:42

10. **Keep a diary or journal with your meditation notes.** Record the revelations and directions the Lord is speaking to you from your meditation times. Write down the precious meanings of God's word. These notes will become a treasured wealth of insights, directions to help you live and pray more effectively. You will find you return to them many times and add further insights over time!

Hab. 2:1-3 "I will stand at my watch and station myself on the ramparts; I will look to see what he will say to me, and what answer I am to give to this complaint. Then the LORD replied: "Write down the revelation and make it plain on tablets so that a herald may run with it. For the revelation awaits an appointed time; it speaks of the end and will not prove false. Though it linger, wait for it; it will certainly come and will not delay."

When meditating on the Word it is helpful to divide your paper into three sections. Write out the verse in section 1, then your meditation notes on the meaning or understanding of the words, etc. in section 2 and finally your prayer notes or response to God in the third column. (See "Biblical Meditation Template" handout)

Bible Verse	What Does This Mean?	Response to God
Hab. 2:1 "I will stand on my guard post And station myself on the rampart; And I will keep watch to see what He will speak to me, And how I may reply when I am reproved."	Stand – a military term, to take a stance of alertness to being unmovable! It is a fixed position, and suggests great stability, not to be moved or swayed by circumstances. Guard post, again a military term related to being a watchman on duty to watch carefully, be very alert. Rampart – a watchtower, positioned to see in all directions.	Lord, I want to hear Your voice and know what You desire to speak to me! Work in my heart to be attentive to Your Word. I realize I am living in a world that is at war with You and Your children. Help me to be alert and ready to obey You!

11. **Always respond to the LORD!** Our meditations should always bring forth a response to the Lord. Our relationship with the LORD deepens and His Word takes root and becomes a powerful force in our when we develop the pattern of responding to Him regarding what the LORD has spoken to you. This isn't hard, just talk to the Lord about what He is saying to you. See [Isaiah 61-62](#)

Campbell McAlpine taught that as we meditate, we **breath in the truth** by receiving God's Word and allowing the Holy Spirit to give us understanding. Then as we respond to the LORD, **we breathe it out** in prayer. Our prayers allow Him to release this Word by His Spirit into our heart and lives. As we pray, we allow the LORD to develop and expand the meditation as we pray with one another. **This precious time of nearness to the Lord will bring forth a response to Him in many forms:** Adoration; Praise and Worship; Repentance; Prayer and Petitions; Intercession for others

12. **LEARN—APPLY—TEACH!** As we learn to meditate and pray His Word, we are to first apply it in our own life and our own prayer groups, but then we pray these prayers in wider circles around us, our church, churches in the city, believers, the lost, etc. When we have learned how to meditate, ask the Lord for opportunities to bless and teach others what we have learned.

ENCOURAGEMENT: Anyone can meditate upon the Word of God. One of the truly beautiful things about Biblical Meditation is that you don't need to be a Bible scholar, teacher or theologian - or even an adult - to meditate upon the Word. Campbell McAlpine often said, that to meditate on the word of God all you need is an open Bible and an open heart.

Children can learn to meditate on the Word from an early age. They will see incredible truths that will strengthen their faith; and seeing God speak to them personally will encourage you as their parent. I strongly encourage you to teach your children to meditate on the Word from an early age.

As I taught my four-year-old daughter to meditate, I was amazed at the depth of understanding of God's Word that she was acquiring. For those of you who have children, I found that it worked well to select a verse for her. We then talked together about what the verse meant. We discussed the meanings and often looked up words she didn't understand in the dictionary. She loved listening to the verse in different translations. When we finished this I would read the verse to her again and ask, 'now what is God telling you from this verse', or "what does this verse mean to you now?" I would then ask her, "What would you like to say to God about this?" I wrote down her notes and prayers, later, she wanted to write part of her notes herself.

<i>Verse for Meditation</i>	<i>What does it mean?</i>	<i>What do I want to say to God?</i>
<i>"Delight yourself in the Lord, and He will give you the desires of your heart." Ps. 37:4</i>	"Obey him and trust Him and be gentle and kind. Delight means to love you. Delight means happy that will never end. Delight means to enjoy God, to be happy about God, to take great pleasure in God."	God, I do enjoy You. I love you and I do take pleasure to know You. I love and worship you. I don't want to make any other gods to worship. It is the desire of my heart to go to heaven and be in the home You make for me. I want to have love, joy, kindness, peace, gentleness, self-control, patience, goodness and faith. I love you, Jesus, from Alissa.
<i>"Turn away from evil and do good." Ps.34:14</i>	That means don't do any evil stuff like call names or say I don't love you, or I hate you. No more evil!	God help me to be good. God help me turn away from evil and love one another as myself. I love you Holy God. God, I love You. I love you very much."

Resources to use for Word Study

- "Alone with God" by Campbell McAlpine
- Strong's Concordance and Dictionary (available on the internet)
- Blue Letter Bible (downloadable app that has many study aids)
- Webster's 1828 Dictionary available online at www.onelook.com
- Gleanings in Paul by A.W. Pink is series of meditations on all of Paul's prayers for the Church. It is an excellent resource for prayer! (available for free download on the internet, or may be purchased in book form.)

Handouts

- The All-Powerful Word of God
- Biblical Meditation Guide (template)
- Biblical Meditation Example: Dew
- All the Parables of Jesus
- Steps to the Throne by Shelagh McAlpine