

## Thoughts from Noted Christian Leaders on Meditating on God's Word

The importance of meditating on God's word for spiritual transformation is highlighted in the following quotes from great Christian leaders of various denominations over the centuries.

Someone once said that 1 in 100 Christians read Scripture regularly; 1 in 1000 memorize Scripture; but only 1 in 10,000 meditate!

"Meditation is the grand means of our growth in grace; without it, prayer itself is an empty service." (Charles Simeon)

"Meditation keeps out Satan. It increases knowledge, it inflames love, it works patience, it promotes prayer, it evidences sincerity." (Philip Henry)

"Victorious Christians are people who know the promises of God, because they spend time meditating on God's Word (Josh 1:8); they believe the promises of God, because the Word of God generates faith in their hearts (Ro 10:17); and they reckon on these promises and obey what God tells them to do. To "reckon" means to count as true in your life what God says about you in His Word." Warren Wiersbe (Be Strong)

"The inward meditation [of God's Word] is the thing that makes the soul rich towards God. This is the godly man's occupation. Put the spice into the mortar by reading, beat it with the pestle of meditation—so shall the sweet perfume be exhaled."  
Read the Bible carefully, and then meditate and meditate and meditate. (C H Spurgeon)

The Puritan writer Thomas Brooks offers an excellent description of Biblical 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 (cp Ps 19:10-note; Ps 119:103-note)—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."

John Piper explains that meditation on the Word is difficult if one does not first memorize it and that, "the depth and solidity and certainty of your walk with God and your communion with God will rise and fall with whether God's own written Word is the warp and woof of the fabric of your fellowship."

"Our lives are unbelievably distracted. We are experts at multi-tasking, surfing, and skimming, but it is harder than ever to meditate. Therefore, it is imperative to intentionally cultivate meditation on God's Word. But how? If possible, find a consistent time, place, and plan. Then read slowly and carefully. Reread and reread. Read out loud (which is implied in the Hebrew word for meditation in Psalm 1:2). Read prayerfully. Read with a pen in hand. Memorize texts that you read." (PreceptAustin)

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Henry Blackaby writes that "Scripture is wonderful, if you meditate on it. Our problem is we read without meditation. Your life will never be anchored like a tree without meditation (cp Ps 1:2-3). Some say, "I've read through the Bible at least once every year." Well, that's wonderful, but your life will not be anchored by a river of living water until you stop and meditate on God's Word. It's the one who meditates on God's Word day and night who becomes like a tree planted by the rivers of water. So, you really need to know what meditating is. Now, in our generation, we talk about transcendental meditation. On television we can see the stereotypical meditator, eyes closed, mumbling the same phrase over and over. That's not biblical meditation at all.

"Reading either Scripture or Christian books, apart from meditation, does little good. It is much the same as not digesting what you eat--this only starves the soul. How many read the Bible thus!" (Unknown)

There are probably many answers to this question, but the following quote from Spurgeon suggests one of his "secrets"... "I quarry out the Truth when I read, but I smelt the ore and get the pure gold out of it when I meditate!...For lack of meditation the Truth of God runs by us and we miss and lose it. Our treacherous memory is like a sieve—and what we hear and what we read runs through it and leaves but little behind—and that little is often unprofitable to us by reason of our lack of diligence to get thoroughly at it. I often find it very profitable to get a text as a sweet morsel under my tongue in the morning and to keep the flavor of it, if I can, in my mouth all day!"

Charles Spurgeon: Morning & Evening, October 12 "I will meditate in thy precepts." — Psalm 119:15 -- There are times when solitude is better than society, and silence is wiser than speech. We should be better Christians if we were more alone, waiting upon God, and gathering through meditation on his Word spiritual strength for labour in his service. We ought to muse upon the things of God, because we thus get the real nutriment out of them. Truth is something like the cluster of the vine: if we would have wine from it, we must bruise it; we must press and squeeze it many times. The bruiser's feet must come down joyfully upon the bunches, or else the juice will not flow; and they must well tread the grapes, or else much of the precious liquid will be wasted. So we must, by meditation, tread the clusters of truth, if we would get the wine of consolation therefrom. Our bodies are not supported by merely taking food into the mouth, but the process which really supplies the muscle, and the nerve, and the sinew, and the bone, is the process of digestion. It is by digestion that the outward food becomes assimilated with the inner life. Our souls are not nourished merely by listening awhile to this, and then to that, and then to the other part of divine truth. Hearing, reading, marking, and learning, all require inwardly digesting to complete their usefulness, and the inward digesting of the truth lies for the most part in meditating upon it. Why is it that some Christians, although they hear many sermons, make but slow advances in the divine life? Because they neglect their closets, and do not thoughtfully meditate on God's Word. They love the wheat, but they do not grind it; they would have the corn, but they will not go forth into the fields to gather it; the fruit hangs upon the tree, but they will not

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pluck it; the water flows at their feet, but they will not stoop to drink it. From such folly deliver us, O Lord, and be this our resolve this morning, "I will meditate in thy precepts."

Beware of meditation that ends in pious words without pious practices (cf Jas 1:22-note). True meditation fuels God honoring moral actions. A changed attitude toward God and fellow man should be the result, including things like a changed work habit, a changed relationship to one's spouse or family, in short -- a changed life! Anything less means your "meditation" is little more than "pious platitudes"

Continual meditation on the Word is not ineffectual ... God, by one and another promise, establishes our faith. (John Calvin)

If God's Word is not the desire and delight of your heart, plead with Him until He grants your request (1Th 5:17-note) so that your soul might cultivate an appetite for the pure milk of His Word (1Pe 2:2-note). If you pray this with clean hands and a pure heart (Ps 24:4-note), you can be assured God will answer it affirmatively for it is in accordance with His good and perfect will (1Jn 5:14, 15, cp Mt 7:7-note). Will you dare to pray this prayer? Will you dare not pray this prayer!

What is biblical meditation?

"Meditation is 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, J I: Knowing God)