

## UNITE

### **“Meditating on the Word”**

Suppose I told you that I had found the greatest hamburger on the planet

I told you about the sesame seed bun - the thick cut bacon, the delicious cheese

The beautiful patty

You might ask me “how does it taste?”

What if I responded to you – “I don’t know, I haven’t actually eaten it but it sure looks good!”

You might think that I don’t really know what I’m talking about!

You see, in order for me to actually enjoy the hamburger the way it supposed to be enjoyed, I would need to eat it, to take it in. Then I could actually tell you how good it was – because I have fully experienced it.

The Word of God is similar in that:

For the most part, I’m sure that most of us here have seen that there is the beauty and majesty of God in the Bible

We have seen that there are commands for us to follow and instruction on how we are to live

But how often do we actually ingest the Word – ponder upon it – chew as it were – take it in and digest it so that we are nourished and satisfied?

How do we do this? By not just reading the Bible but by “Meditating upon the Word”

Let's look at:

- I. What is meditation?
- II. Why should we mediate?
- III. How do we meditate?

**I. What is meditation?**

A. Eastern religion

1. Buddhism, etc

- a. Breathe deeply, concentrate only on your breathing
- b. Clear your mind of all thoughts

B. Biblical Meditation

Don Whitney from his helpful book *Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life* that I consulted often for this teaching:

“Meditation (is) deep thinking on the truths and spiritual realities revealed in Scripture for the purposes of understanding, application, and prayer”

1. It is the opposite of Buddhist meditation
2. We fill our minds with God's Word and think deeply upon it

**II. Why should we meditate?**

- A. The Bible promises wonderful things for us if we will mediate upon the Word:

**Psalms 1:1-3**

<sup>1</sup>Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked,  
nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers;

<sup>2</sup>but his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night.

<sup>3</sup>He is like<sup>1</sup> a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season,  
and its leaf does not wither. In all that he does, he prospers. <sup>4</sup>The wicked are not  
so, but are like chaff that the wind drives away.

Whitney puts it this way:

“The tree of your spiritual life thrives best with meditation because it helps you to absorb the water of God’s Word. Merely hearing or reading the Bible, for example, can be like a short rainfall on hard ground. Regardless of the amount or intensity of the rain, most runs off and little sinks in. Meditation opens the soil of the soul and lets the water of God’s Word percolate in deeply. The result is extraordinary fruitfulness and spiritual prosperity” (Whitney in *Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life*, p. 50)

1. If we just read the Word without meditating it has a tendency to slap against our brains and slide off. We need to meditate so that God’s Words can penetrate our minds and hearts and change us.
- B. The Bible calls us to meditate
1. Examples

- a. The Psalmist says in **Psalm 77:12** “I will ponder all your work, and meditate on your mighty deeds”
  - God’s works and mighty deeds are found in Scripture. It would be wise of us to not simply be acquainted with what God has done and is doing but also to think deeply upon it.
- b. David says in **Psalm 119:15** “I will meditate on your precepts and fix my eyes on your ways”
  - As we meditate – think deeply of God’s commands and his ways – we grow to know what God is truly like. We grow in our knowledge of him and in our relationship with him

C. Meditation strengthens us and gives us courage

**Daniel 11:32** “...The people who know their God shall stand firm and take action”

- 1. As we think deeply and ponder God’s Word, our understanding of him grows. We see that he is all powerful, almighty, and sovereign over all. We also come to understand the great salvation that Christ accomplished on the cross. We are strengthened in our faith to serve Him

D. Meeting with God

- 1. Ultimately, meditating on God’s Word is a wonderful way to meet with God. He speaks to us, we consider his words, and we respond in prayer and worship

**III. How do we meditate?**

A. Pray

“Open my eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of your law.” (**Psalm 119:18**)

1. The Holy Spirit is the “Spirit of Truth”. The Bible is God’s words – let us first go to the author and ask for his help
- B. Find a verse to meditate on
  1. As you begin to read – pay attention to any particular verse or section that sticks out to you. Settle on that section of Scripture
- C. There are different ways of meditating, here are a two examples from *Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life*:
  1. Look for application in the text
    - a. Ask yourself “how am I to respond to this text? What would God have me do as a result of my encounter with this part of His Word?”

**Example:** Here is something from my quiet time:

“This is how one should regard us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God.

[2] Moreover, it is required of stewards that they be found trustworthy.” (1 Corinthians 4:1-2)

- God has entrusted me with the Gospel – how am I doing at being a steward of it? How can I maximize the opportunities in my work in the Church ?
- Am I being a trustworthy steward? Am I making the best use of my time?

- b. **James 1: 22-25** “But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. <sup>23</sup>For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks intently at his natural face in a mirror. <sup>24</sup>For he looks at himself and goes away and at once forgets what he was like. <sup>25</sup>But the one who looks into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and perseveres, being no hearer who forgets but a doer who acts, he will be blessed in his doing.
  - c. Mediation helps us to not forget and to see how we can be doers
2. Pray through the text
- a. You go to pray in the morning – “God, help me and my family today” that is a fine prayer but meditating on and praying through Scripture can help add life and richness to that prayer
  - b. **Psalms 23:1** “The LORD is my Shepherd; I shall not want”
    - “Lord, you are my Shepherd, the one who leads me and cares for me. Will you lead me today? Will you lead and care for my brothers/sisters/parents?”
    - “You are the one who provides my needs – will you give me what I need to today? Will you help me in my schoolwork/to honor my parents/to make me more like Christ?”
  - c. By praying the Scriptures, we bring it home into our relationship with God. We are thinking and applying the Word to our lives.

- d. We also have an endless supply of fresh ways to energize and inform our prayers
3. Taking the time
- a. It is good and important to read the Bible but if we simply scan through the words quickly, we are missing out on all that God intends for us in his Word.
  - b. God does not simply want us to know things about the Bible, he invites us to come and know him! We can meet with him in his Word
  - c. It is like the hamburger – we know what it looks like but we won't truly know the goodness of it until we chew it and digest it

**CLOSE**

Are you taking in God's Word and digesting it? Are you thinking deeply upon the Word of God? Or are you simply staring at it and perhaps appreciating some of its qualities while rarely applying it and feeding your soul?

**Psalm 34:8** "O taste and see that the Lord is good"

Meditation is the process of using our spiritual taste buds to taste the goodness of God in his Word

This week, I encourage you to open the Word and to meditate – think deeply upon what you are reading.

- Begin by asking God to help you
- Find a verse to meditate on
- Turn it over in your mind, ask God how this applies to you, respond to his Word in prayer

I promise you that as you take the time to meet with God in his Word by meditating on it, you will find a feast for your soul and you will grow in your knowledge of Christ – what could be better than knowing the Savior who bore our sins in his body on the tree so that we could be forgiven and have eternal life?

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