

Day 16

The Importance of Meditating on God's Word

START WITH HEART

Lord, as You speak please help me listen with my whole heart and Holy Spirit please meet me today and make me more like Jesus.

Psalm 1:1-3 (ESV)

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; 2 but his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on His law he meditates day and night. 3 He is like 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.

The bible is full of instructions to meditate on God's Word, often called "the law" in the Old Testament. To meditate means to reflect, ponder, think on, contemplate and study. Nowadays, meditation has become something associated with the New Age and Eastern philosophies, but in the context of our Christian life it can be described as the process of deliberately focusing on specific verses or bible passages and reflecting on their meaning and how they apply to our lives and our walk with the Lord, and to the gospel in general.

You've probably heard of other Christians being called "baby Christians"! That's because when we come to know the Lord, or get born again, we are like spiritual babies in God's family. Just as human babies need milk to grow, we need spiritual

milk to grow. That's why 1 Peter 2:2 (ESV) says: "*As newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the Word, that you may grow thereby.*" If we don't study the Word and apply it to our lives, we could be saved for many years but still be a baby, spiritually.

Contrary to the Eastern way of meditating, where the mind must be cleared of everything and a conscious effort must be made to relax completely, meditating on God's Word is a very active process. A favourite scripture of mine is Proverbs 4:20–22 (KJV), which says: "*My son (or daughter!), attend to My words, incline your ears to My sayings. Let them not depart from your eyes; keep them in the midst of your heart. For they are LIFE to those who find them, and HEALTH to all their flesh.*"

This passage is just full of verbs. In various translations the words used are: *attend, pay attention to, concentrate, learn it by heart, keep it in plain view, be willing to learn, incline, keep, find*. The senses are involved: hearing and seeing. What blows me away is that we have to FIND these words which give life! So meditating on God's Word is a very active pursuit.

I have found that listening to sermons, reading books on the bible etc. will build up my faith and knowledge, but it is a more passive way of pursuing God. Actual personal study of the Word is active – we are like Alice in Wonderland, exploring all sorts of rabbit-holes! And it brings the revelation that the Holy Spirit wants to give us personally.

It is not random, I think, that Psalms opens by telling us not to walk in step with, or like, the wicked, or stand as sinners do, or sit in the company of mockers, but instead to DELIGHT in God's law/word and to meditate on it day and night. It's interesting that meditating on God's Word will always bring rewards, such as life and health in the previous scripture passage, and in Psalm 1:3 we have this amazing picture of fruitfulness, provision, stability and success, which we are promised if we pursue the knowledge of God's Word! Other words for "delight" range from joyfulness, excitement and pleasure to elation, bliss and euphoria, and it is true that the more time we spend in the Word the more exciting and pleasurable it becomes!

A final scripture I want to share with you on this subject is Joshua 1:7-8 (ESV). This is an instruction God gives Joshua just after Moses has died. Joshua is probably feeling really overwhelmed and nervous about having to not just take over from such a mighty leader, but also to be the one who will take the Israelites into the promised land. God says: *“Only be strong and very courageous, being careful to do according to all the law that Moses my servant commanded you. Do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may have good success wherever you go. 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 all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous and then you will have good success.”*

When I first got saved I thought that prospering and having success meant that I would no longer have problems or troubles, and that I would get rich! It's interesting, though, that the word “success” in verse 7 is also translated as “may act wisely”, and when we look at Joshua we see that he had many battles to fight and troubles to overcome. However, the Lord was with him in those times, strengthening, guiding and helping him to stay on course and fulfil His objective. I've realised that God's definition of success and prosperity is not the same as the world's, but that as we fill our hearts and minds with His Word, He gives us a joy and peace, a security and stability that is not dependant on our circumstances or anything that the enemy throws at us, or that we are subject to because we live in a fallen world. Knowing Him and walking in His Word, day by day – that is actual success and prosperity!

JOURNALING QUESTIONS:

1. Do I set time aside each day to meditate on God's Word and receive personal revelation from Him?
2. Can I look back at my walk with Christ, so far, and see a steady growth, leading to fruitfulness, in various areas of my life?
3. Have I found that knowing more and more of God's Word helps and strengthens me in the situations and circumstances I face in my life?

Father, thank You that in Your Word You have given me my handbook for life.

*Please help me to make time in Your Word an absolute priority,
and to see it as my “go to” in every situation.*

WORSHIP SONG:

Waymaker, by Michael W. Smith with Vanessa Campagna & Madelyn Berry (Album: Awaken: The Surrounded Experience)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SE_M9noEhNE

by Susan van Niekerk