



Study 19

THE

MEDITATING

THE NEW TESTAMENT COMMANDS

I will ponder all your work, and meditate on your mighty deeds.

Psalm 77:12

There is a world of difference between the meditation of Eastern religions and the meditation described in Scripture. Eastern meditation is about emptying the mind. Biblical meditation is about *filling* the mind. Eastern meditation involves mindless chanting and meaningless repetition. Biblical meditation involves mulling, pondering, thinking, considering, and musing.

1. What was Joshua told to do in Joshua 1:8 and what was the promised result of this activity?

2. According to Psalm 1:2, how often do the righteous meditate on God's Word?



3. What does Philippians 3:15 encourage believers to do?

To meditate on a Scripture is like holding up a diamond to the light. As we admire the precious jewel, we slowly turn it and discover new ways that it captures light and changes its properties. In a similar way, when we meditate on Scripture we are allowing the weight of the text to sink into our minds and grip our souls so that our appreciation of God's greatness grows resulting in our fuller surrender to Him.



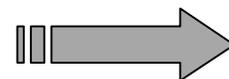
Negative meditation is called *worry*. Jesus Christ commanded His followers not to practice this type of meditation (Matthew 6:25-34).

4. Instead, what does the New Testament command us to meditate on according to Philippians 4:8?

5. What value might there be in a group of believers choosing to meditate on Romans 12:9-21?

"If you know how to worry, you already know how to meditate."

Rick Warren, THE PURPOSE DRIVEN LIFE, page 190



6. Consider 2Timothy 2:7. How does it say we can find the wisdom of God?



In the Middle Ages the Medieval monks developed a novel way of praying. It became known as *contemplative praying*. These monks taught that the true goal of prayer was communion with God and as long as people were continually petitioning God they were not able to truly come into His presence with a still heart. This type of praying was promoted as the true means to holiness. It soon became confused with Biblical meditation.

7. How might a person’s responses to life’s difficulties change if they meditated as prescribed in Hebrews 3:1? (Note also Hebrews 12:3)

8. How might our Christian fellowship be developed if we meditated according to Hebrews 10:24?

Meditating on Scripture can be a discipline. That is, we can deliberately select a Bible verse or passage and choose to consider it - mull it over – ponder its implications. But perhaps more often than not, the Holy Spirit will take the seed of the Word of God and bring it to our remembrance (John 14:26). This makes reading (and listening to) the Word of God even more important to ensure that we have sown this seed into our hearts.



9. When did the Psalmist say that he would meditate on God’s Word?
(Psalm 63:6)
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10. What example can be taken for us from Psalm 77:12? (Note also Psalm 143:5;
145:5)
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The purpose of meditating on God’s Word is to have our hearts, minds, and lives changed to the image of Christ (note 2Corinthians 3:18). By dwelling on God and His Word through Biblical meditation we are cleansing our minds from the world’s filth (note 2Corinthians 7:1; 2Timothy 2:21).

11. What is the relationship between meditative Bible reading and praying? What kind of prayers can a meditating believer pray when reading Scripture?
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Finally, Christians like to misuse certain theological words to describe the experiences they have when meditating on God’s Word. Often as a result of meditating on Scripture, a believer will gain some helpful insight. This experience is often called “a revelation”. Before the New Testament was completed it seems that the Holy Spirit graced the early Church with much revelation (1Cor. 14:6, 26, 30; 2Cor. 12:1; Gal. 1:12; Eph. 3:3). A revelation was *a revealing of something previously hidden*. But when the New Testament was completed God’s revelation to man was *sufficiently* complete also. Therefore, in the strictest sense, the Holy Spirit does not give us revelations in the sense of “new truth”. Rather, the Holy Spirit gives the meditative believer *illumination* (the shedding of light) about Scripture. *Selah*.

Amen.