



# Group Lesson 2- Context in Biblical Meditation

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Some words appear in different colored font to give extra emphasis, encouraging further meditation.

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The Invitation to Overcome Revelation 3:20

**Basic Principle:** Context is necessary in meditation.

## Thinking Things Through

1. During the Christmas season what hoops do people often go through to secularize the holiday but maintain the sense of peace and joy it promises?
2. When people choose to view the holiday season this way, what are they missing out on?

Leader – When taken out of context of the birth of Christ, Christmas becomes whatever people desire it to be, sometimes with significance, but never within it's true purpose or potential.

## Digging Deeper

Read Revelation 3:19-21

3. What does verse 20 mean to you? What you have come to understand about it from the broader Christian culture?

Leader- This is a bit of a trick question. The very idea (while popular) of 'what does this verse mean to me' never comes first in proper understanding of scripture. It always comes last, after context is understood. Through this verse the necessity of context in meditation is made clear. Verse 20 is well known, but the context less so. Traditionally this verse is used to convey a message that Jesus simply wants to be a friend whom we welcome into our life and he sits with us and comforts us and dines with us. The concept that there might be some expectation on our lives is often dropped. Full context paints a much different picture of what Jesus is saying.

Read Revelation 3:14-16

4. Who is this section of Revelation written to? Why is the angel instructed to write it?

Leader- This message is written to a specific group of people (the church in Laodicea vs 14) for a certain purpose (because they are lukewarm vs. 15-16)

Read Revelation 17-18

5. What is the heart of the issue driving the condition of the church described in vs. 15?

Leader - The church was materially satisfied, and it stunted their spiritual growth. They were limited in their ability to have the mind of Christ (1 Corinthians 2)

6. What is the remedy for the spiritually lax condition prescribed, and how might it make a difference?

Leader – Revelation 3:20 should be broken down for a deeper understanding. “Behold, I (Jesus) stand at the door, and knock: If any man hear My voice and open the door, I will come in to him (meet you where you are) and will dine with him and he with Me.” In context, Jesus is inviting lukewarm believers for a time of fellowship with Him as the remedy for a dangerously lax spiritual condition. It is time with Jesus (via the Holy Spirit) that breaks religious apathy. Therefore, in context Revelation 3:20 is about a shift in life perspective that will lead to self-sacrifice and discomfort, and not about a comfortable friendship with Jesus, based on our terms. .

7. When Jesus invites us to “dine” (the day’s central meal) what does that mean in practical ways?

Leader - Jesus says believers can hear His voice as He calls them, all they have to do is open the door; take time for Him, sit with the Word and believe He will speak. He is inviting us to both gain nourishment from the word, and digest it through meditation and application. The root word for meditate is that same as ruminant (to chew).

8. If you needed to approach God's word like you need to approach the supper table, how would this transform your life?

Leader - Consistency in the Word is important. Sup is used for dine in the King James Version. Sup is the main meal of the day, showing the need of this daily time with Jesus in the Word. "He sups with us and we with Him" v20 This speaks of personal interaction, as you respond to the Word He has for you. Furthermore, it is physically awkward to avoid food for too long. Prolonged periods of absence from his Word should lead to hunger.

9. With all of this context firmly in mind, what is Jesus saying in Revelation 3:20?

Leader - Adding just the two verses surrounding v20 gives clarity. Revelation 3:19 "As many as I love, I rebuke (tell a fault) and chasten (discipline, train), therefore be zealous and repent (change)." Response: This seems harsh, but God's rebuke brings a benefit. "Turn at My rebuke; (repent and change your thinking and behavior) Surely I will pour out My Spirit on you; I will make My Words known to you" (Proverbs 1:23) Purpose: God's rebuke is to result in chasteness, holiness, a restoration to spiritual vibrancy; therefore, it is wisdom to repent thoroughly and quickly.

Read Revelation 3:21

10. Continuing to remember context, what does vs. 21 convey?

Leader - "To him who overcomes (gets the victory over sin - here lukewarmness), I will grant to sit with Me on My throne..." This is a place of privileged intimacy and delegated authority in prayer. Desiring this should be a natural part of our Christian experience.

## Doing Life Together

11. What do you think about this invitation to intimacy with Jesus? If you are hesitant what would you need to change? How will you make the time necessary to spend with the Lord?

Leader- Provided on the next page is a group activity (Putting it into Practice) for you to explore today and a following that a take home walkthrough guide (Meditation is the Heart of God) for your group members to learn to meditate on Psalm 1. Encourage your group to dedicate one day this week to spending time chewing on Psalm 1. You can print it off or email it to them.

## Putting it Into Practice

### Instructions:

1. Print a copy of the following page for each participant of your group.
2. Review the instructions.
3. Pray that God's spirit would open your hearts and minds to his living Word.
4. Slowly read aloud **Jeremiah 29:1-14**. Pausing at the end of each sentence.
5. Remember to ask, "what is the context of the promises of God in this passage?"
6. When you get to the end of each sentence or verse allow people to make notes on what God's spirit is impressing on them.
7. After three or four minutes, reread the passage and repeat the exercise, allowing God's spirit to further impress upon your hearts His Truth.
8. Move into a time of prayer, allowing these revelations to inform you on how to pray, as well as applying them towards the things you would normally pray about. (Hint: Repeating the same prayers as others have already prayed ought to be encouraged as the spirit may be nudging people towards agreement)
9. At the end, debrief the experience. How is this different or similar to how you normally pray? What did you learn from this passage that changed how you prayed?

Biblical Meditation is  
sitting at Jesus' feet | hearing God through His Word | receiving His Word by faith |  
responding, being a doer of the Word | praying out what you received

Biblical Mediation results in  
building faith | revelation | heart preparation | healing | strength | relationship |  
discipleship

### Meditation can be practiced in this way:

- ✚ Use your Bible, read through the passage carefully.
- ✚ Take a silent time meditating on the passage.
- ✚ Go back and reread the passage, be alert, pondering the Word of God.
- ✚ Allow the Holy Spirit to direct you to focus on a portion of the Word.
- ✚ What is God saying to me that I can pray about?
- ✚ How do I apply this to myself? Ask- What does this teach me about the character of God? What does this teach me about His will for my life? (
- ✚ What is my response to God?

**TRY IT OUT** — **Jeremiah 29:1-14** New International Version (NIV)

This is the text of the letter that the prophet Jeremiah sent from Jerusalem to the surviving elders among the exiles and to the priests, the prophets and all the other people Nebuchadnezzar had carried into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon.

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<sup>2</sup>(This was after King Jehoiachin<sup>14</sup> and the queen mother, the court officials and the leaders of Judah and Jerusalem, the skilled workers and the artisans had gone into exile from Jerusalem.) <sup>3</sup>He entrusted the letter to Elasah son of Shaphan and to Gemariah son of Hilkiyah, whom Zedekiah king of Judah sent to King Nebuchadnezzar in Babylon. It said:

<sup>4</sup>This is what the LORD Almighty, the God of Israel, says to all those I carried into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon: <sup>5</sup>"Build houses and settle down; plant gardens and eat what they produce. <sup>6</sup>Marry and have sons and daughters; find wives for your sons and give your daughters in marriage, so that they too may have sons and daughters. Increase in number there; do not decrease.

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<sup>7</sup>Also, seek the peace and prosperity of the city to which I have carried you into exile. Pray to the LORD for it, because if it prospers, you too will prosper." <sup>8</sup>Yes, this is what the LORD Almighty, the God of Israel, says: "Do not let the prophets and diviners among you deceive you. Do not listen to the dreams you encourage them to have. <sup>9</sup>They are prophesying lies to you in my name. I have not sent them," declares the LORD.

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This is what the LORD says: "When seventy years are completed for Babylon, I will come to you and fulfill my good promise to bring you back to this place. <sup>11</sup>For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.

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<sup>12</sup>Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. <sup>13</sup>You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.

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<sup>14</sup>I will be found by you," declares the LORD, "and will bring you back from captivity. I will gather you from all the nations and places where I have banished you," declares the LORD, "and will bring you back to the place from which I carried you into exile."

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**Prayer**

**Application:** In a prayer group, share briefly to get the full prayer picture of the issue, and to discern what God is saying at this time, then pray out what was received. If by yourself, simply pray out what you received from God during this lesson. Biblical meditation is about drawing our life into God's word, through prayer, not forcing God to conform to our prayer requests.



# Meditation as the Heart of Prayer

## Psalm 1

### TAKE HOME PORTION

#### Benefits of Biblical Meditation

Psalm 1 shows a way to seek God for the prayers on His heart.

**Psalm 1** “**Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stands in the path of sinners, nor sits in the seat of the scornful;**” This is a clear warning of what not to do. If you do not walk with God, where will you get your counsel? If you do not stand for God, who and what will you stand for? If you sit in the seat of the scornful, you will become a scoffer and soon you will walk, stand and sit with those who oppose God.

Invitation: **walk**, **stand** and **sit** with God. What is your **response**?

**WALK:** Seek to walk in God’s counsel for the prayer time by meditating in the Word first as the source of your prayers.

**“Can two walk together unless they are agreed?” Amos 3:3**

**Respond** to what you receive during the quiet time of meditation in the Word. Come into some kind of honest agreement with God about what you receive. How could you pray for someone else what you are unwilling to do yourself? Agreement with God’s will suggests answered prayer. (1 John 5:14,15)

**STAND:** You stand for and with God protected, equipped in the armor of God. (Ephesians 6:10-18)

You stand for the things God stands for – For example, His Word, His commands as sanctity of life, His words on marriage. You stand with God and pray for those who practice alternate life styles. You stand for Israel and pray because it is the apple of God’s eye. God’s concerns become your concerns; His prayers, your prayers.

**SIT:** You sit with the Lord at His table to receive the Word, then sit with Him at the place of prayer in submitted authority as the Word goes forth.

As you sit on a regular basis, the Word becomes the bread of life to you. You learn to recognize God’s voice through the Word and sense the direction the Holy Spirit gives as Teacher. The table of the Lord is where your soul is restored and your spirit strengthened; it is a place of counsel, dialogue, fellowship, a place of delight.

## Psalm 1:2

**“But his delight is in the law (Word) of the LORD, and in His law he meditates day and night.”**

To meditate day and night requires a conscious choice to keep God's Word before your face, and in your heart. Choose to delight yourself in God's Word. This is not impossible as you meditate negatively day and night without realizing it when you worry or complain.

How much more will the Holy Spirit help you meditate on the Word if you ask?

**Benefit: v3 “He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that brings forth its fruit in its season, whose leaf also shall not wither; and whatever he does shall prosper.”** Whatever this meditator does shall prosper because He is in fellowship and agreement with God. He

walks, stands and sits in alignment with God, therefore what he does will prosper.

**Prosper** here means a breaking forth. This means you will find the breakthroughs you need.

The intercessor who becomes rooted and grounded in the Word has a constant source of spiritual water from the washing of the Word, and draws strength from the wells of salvation within each believer. (Ephesians 5:26, Isaiah 12:1)

The prayer time prospers because it is supernaturally sourced and directed. There is fruit from the prayer meeting that endures.

The intercessor is refreshed and strengthened from the Word; their leaf does not wither.

This is a classic meditation scripture, perfect for a prayer meeting or as a private devotional with prayer. The context of the final three verses contrast the lack of blessing for the unsaved and can touch your heart to pray for the lost. There is a separate Psalm 1 meditation for this.

### Application:

**Meditate** to hear from God, go back through Scripture and reread it. This can be as simple as your attention being drawn to a word, a phrase. Let God speak to you through your thoughts and impressions.

**Receive and Respond** personally to what God is saying to you through the Word. He knows your every thought. Be honest; He will meet you where you are.

**Share:** If in a group, share briefly just to get the full prayer picture and so others can pray with you and you with them.

**Pray** out simply what you receive, pray with others about what they received. Pray for the Church, the Body of Christ and you will touch believers around the world and be blessed yourself.