



Group Lesson 1- Introduction Biblical Meditation & Prayer

"My mouth shall speak wisdom, and the meditation of my heart shall give understanding." — Psalm 49:3

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

This is the first of a series of basic lessons that you may use to guide you through Biblical meditation and prayer by yourself or as part of a prayer group. Each lesson emphasizes a different principle giving you a basic understanding of Biblical meditation and how it relates to prayer.

Thinking Things Through

Biblical Meditation is a spiritual discipline found in the Old and New Testaments. Biblical Meditation starts with the premise that:

The God of the Bible continues to speak to His people through the Word

Meditating on God's Word gives insight into what is on the heart of God

1. Do you read God's Word with the expectation that he will speak into your life? What practices have you developed to help you maintain this?

Digging Deeper

Meditation is illustrated in the story of the two disciples from Emmaus, returning home saddened and bewildered by Jesus' crucifixion.

Have a volunteer read John 6:41,48-51 & 58

Have another volunteer read Luke 24:13-35

2. What does Luke 24:30-31,35 reveal as the clue to the disciple's recognition of Jesus? Why is this significant?
3. How much time do you think took place between the first meeting of the disciples with Jesus and the revelation of truth? Why is the passing of time between hearing and understanding important in spiritual growth?

4. How do you allow God's word the time needed to apply to various aspects of your life?

5. Focus on vs. 32. When in your life has this happened? Why does it happen in your regular devotional life (or why not)?

6. How do you (or how could you) link what you read in Scripture to what you pray for/about a part of your personal habits?

7. When you pray, is it normal for you to ASK for God to reveal the things on His heart before you pray for your own concerns? How has it benefited your prayer time? If you don't do this, why do you think it has not been something you do?

Closing Thoughts

Meditating on scripture brings us...

...into a place of delegated authority before God where we present Him with the prayers we receive and offer back "His Words in our mouth" in prayer. (Jeremiah 1:9)

...into a spiritual dynamic in prayer as we recognize the moving of the Holy Spirit's leading and direction.

Doing Life Together

Leader- This will be a practice round of meditation, done as a group. Over the next few weeks your group will delve into various facets of meditative prayer and deepen your application of it towards daily life. Often there will be a take home portion that individuals can do on their own to learn these disciplines. One the next pages is a group meditation activity you can do together right now.

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 Philippians 4:8-13. Pausing at the end of each sentence.
5. When you get to the end of the passage allow people to make notes on what God's spirit is impressing on them.
6. After three or four minutes, reread the passage and repeat the exercise, allowing God's spirit to further impress upon your hearts His Truth.
7. 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)
8. 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 (for example, if praying for another person, it would be beneficial to pray that they experience purity, become people who exemplify love, their behavior is commendable, and that their thoughts be filled with praiseworthy and excellent things.)

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? (God is pure, lovely, commendable...) What does this teach me about His will for my life? (He desires that I be pure, lovely, commendable...) His will for his Kingdom work on earth (as it is in heaven).
- ✚ What is my response to God?

TRY IT OUT - Philippians 4:8-13 New International Version (NIV)

Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.

Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice.

And the God of peace will be with you.

I rejoiced greatly in the Lord that at last you renewed your concern for me.

Indeed, you were concerned, but you had no opportunity to show it.

I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances.

I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty.

I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want.

I can do all this through him who gives me strength.
