

Devotion from Lutheran Church Charities- “Learn To Meditate”

But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on His law he meditates day and night. Psalm 1:2

Butterflies cover more ground, but bees gather more honey. That’s because the butterfly just flies over the flowers, whereas the bee lands on each one and stays there long enough to extract the nectar. That’s the difference between merely reading your Bible for a few hurried minutes, and taking time to meditate on what you’re reading. Meditation isn’t something difficult and mysterious that only scholars and ‘spiritual’ people do (don’t have to be a trained theologian). It’s just thinking deeply and continuously about a passage of Scripture, memorizing it, letting it take root, and ‘owning it’ until it becomes a life force (?) operating within you each day. The point isn’t how much Scripture you memorize, it’s what happens to you in the process. Meditating on God’s Word clarifies your understanding and corrects your conduct (work of the Holy Spirit). It enriches your thinking and equips you by making you think different thoughts than if you were watching TV, for example, or texting, or talking on your mobile phone, or shopping (which can be mindless activities). The psalmist writes: *‘The Law of the LORD makes them happy, and they think about it day and night. They are like trees growing beside a stream, trees that produce fruit in season and always have leaves. Those people succeed in everything they do’* (vv. 2-3). Meditating on God’s Word (means of His grace) is the cure for moral and spiritual weakness; for a life with no focus; for a lack of intimacy with God; for chronically weak faith that causes you to fail and keep missing God’s best. So open your Bible, read it, and pray, ‘Lord, what are You saying to me?’ (“hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest” from TLH, page 14 Prayer for the Word). Then meditate on His answer. **Prayer-** *Heavenly Father, thank You for Your Word, help me to not simply read it but digest it. In Jesus’ Name, Amen*

Christian meditation is done with content. The meditation of the psalmists focuses on God’s activity, His deeds of mercy for humanity. **Upon what does the psalm writer meditate in these verses?**

Psalm 63:6-7 When I remember You upon my bed, and meditate on You in the watches of the night; for You have been my help, and in the shadow of Your wings I will sing for joy. _____

Psalm 77:11-12 I will remember the deeds of the Lord; yes, I will remember Your wonders of old. I will ponder all Your work, and meditate on Your mighty deeds. _____

Psalm 119:15, 27, 48 I will meditate on Your precepts and fix my eyes on Your ways...Make me understand the way of Your precepts, and I will meditate on Your wondrous works...I will lift up my hands toward Your commandments, which I love, and I will meditate on Your statutes _____

Psalm 119:147-148 I rise before dawn and cry for help; I hope in Your words. My eyes are awake before the watches of the night, that I may meditate on Your promise. _____

Psalm 143:5 I remember the days of old; I meditate on all that You have done; I ponder the work of Your hands. _____

See Matthew 12:43-45 (parallel in Luke 11:24-26).

Verse 43: People then believed that evil spirits inhabited desert places. If they found no resting place there, they would seek out some human habitation.

Verse 44: “house” is the person who formerly had the demon. “empty, swept”- when we clear our minds like in Transcendental Meditation (based on Hinduism, “omm”) then we allow Satan to have access to our thoughts.

Verse 45: Emptiness of mind that results from mindless meditation invites occupation by evil spirits, leaving the sinner in worse condition than he or she was before.

Lutheran Study Bible: “Jesus describes how a person delivered from a demon becomes worse when there is failure to fill the emptiness with goodness. We can also relapse into old and habitual sins when we fail to nourish our spiritual lives through Word and Sacrament. Only the Holy Spirit can replace the evil spirits that are constantly ‘seeking someone to devour’ (1 Peter 5:8).”

“The meditation suggested for Christians in the Scriptures is primarily an active focusing on the merciful action of a gracious God. Meditation means focusing our thoughts on something rather than nothing. The Bible directs our meditating to something specific, the good news of God’s loving activity” (Kieth A. Gerberding, How to Respond to Transcendental Meditation, CPH, St. Louis, 1977, page 26). Christians point to Christ as God’s power of salvation and meditate upon Him as our Redeemer. “Jesus, I will ponder now on Thy holy Passion.”