

Sessions 5 & 6: Encountering God by Meditating on the Word

I. OUR INHERITANCE IS FOR ENCOUNTER

- A. One of the primary ways we experience God as believers is through His written Word as we let It remain in us (John 15:7-9).

⁷ If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you... ⁹ “As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love. (John 15:7–9)

- B. *Growing in Prayer*. Every believer has felt the yearning to grow with God in prayer. After witnessing the vibrant prayer life of Jesus, the disciples asked Him, “Teach us to pray.” (Luke 11:1).

- C. *Personalizing Biblical Truths*. For some of us it is easy to know many facts concerning the Bible and study it thoroughly—but we have yet to personalized the information. Our thoughts and emotions are not transformed. The information has remained mostly theoretical.

- D. *Learning to come to Jesus*. The Pharisees in Jesus’ day thought they could have life in God through studying the Scriptures. They could not find life because they were not willing to come to the One the Scriptures testified of, the One who *is* life. They only approached the study of the Scriptures academically with their minds, but Jesus says of them that true love for God was not in their hearts.

You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me. But you are not willing to come to Me that you may have life. (John 5.39)

- E. The Holy Spirit living in us, desires to escort us into the knowledge of God as we engage Him about God. He can take our conversation into greater depths through impressions and internal whispers (1 Cor. 2:8–12; John 14:16; 16:12–15).

⁹ But as it is written: “Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, Nor have entered into the heart of man The things which God has prepared for those who love Him.” ¹⁰ But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God. (1 Cor. 2:9-10)

- F. *The goal* of the teaching today is to give you a tool to *encounter the Lord*. In doing this you will *deepen your life in the Word* and *grow your partnership with the Holy Spirit*. Also, you will *develop your spiritual senses*.

II. SCRIPTURAL SUPPORT FOR MEDITATION

- A. In this context, *meditation* is to *muse, mutter, ponder and speak* Scriptural truths for a prolonged period of time, *allowing our mind, emotions, mouth and ears filled with the Word as we engage the Holy Spirit* who dwells inside us. We are *filling our minds*, not emptying them. We are *engaging the Holy Spirit*, not babbling or only repeating words disengaged with His presence and Word. *We will gaze, feel, ponder anew and experience the Lord as we let His Word abide in us* (John 15:7–9).

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B. Moses taught parents to immerse their children in a lifestyle of meditation (Deut. 6:6-9). Moses referred to the first five books of the Bible. Today we have the whole testimony of Jesus in the Scriptures at our disposal! (Luke 24:27; 2 Tim. 3:16)

⁶ “And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. ⁷ You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up... (Deut. 6:6–7)

C. Israel’s kings were to have the Book of the Law before them at all times (Deut. 17:18-20).

¹⁸ “Also it shall be, when he [the King of Israel] sits on the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write for himself a copy of this law in a book...¹⁹ And it shall be with him, and he shall read it all the days of his life... (Deut. 17:18–19)

D. The Lord spoke to Joshua to meditate so he would grow in confidence and succeed in His assignment (Josh 1:6–9). When we cultivate a depth in the Word, we provide a well from which the Lord can draw to sustain our hearts in times of adversity.

⁷ ...be strong and very courageous, ⁸ This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it... then you will have good success. (Josh. 1:7–8)

E. David showed us the fruitfulness of one who has internalized the Word in their heart (Psalm 1:2–3).

² But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in His law he meditates day and night. ³ He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that brings forth its fruit... whose leaf also shall not wither; and whatever he does shall prosper. (Psalm 1:2–3)

F. The Song of Songs tells us that the Lord’s Word brings revelation that exhilarates our hearts like wine does to our physical person (Song of Songs 1:2; 2:3; Psalm 34:8). It’s not enough to intellectually understand a theological truth, we are to experience it.

² Let him [Jesus] kiss me with the kisses of his mouth [His spoken Word]—For your love is better than wine. (Song of Songs 1:2)

III. OUTCOMES FROM MEDITATING ON THE WORD

A. Meditation is a doorway to encounter. We dialogue with the Holy Spirit and He unlocks the treasures of heaven (2 Cor. 2:9–12), the numerous thoughts God has toward us (Psalm 139:17–18) and the immeasurable kindness He wants to show us (Eph. 2:7). The Holy Spirit is a great teacher (John 14:26; 16:13-15; 1 John 2:26-28).

¹⁰ But God has revealed them [deep things in God’s heart] to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God...¹² Now we have received...the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God. (1 Cor. 2:10-12)

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B. Meditation brings maturity (Heb. 5:12-14): mature believers are those who *feed themselves, teach others, possess a developed life in the Word and discernment* (cf. SS 4:2; 6:6). We eat solid foods (meat) by spending time *meditating on the Word and inquiring at the feet of Jesus for ourselves*. We all want to be mature, but many have spiritual diets that do not allow it because their primary nourishment is from milk, *other peoples' processed revelation*. Milk can be *sermons, teachings, testimonies, or books from other believers on a specific topic*. These are good things that stir hunger and bring insight but are insufficient to bring believers into maturity on their own.

12 For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you...need milk and not solid food [meat]. 13 For everyone who partakes only of milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. 14 But solid food belongs to those who are of full age [mature], that is, those who by reason of use [practice] have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil. (Heb. 5:12-14)

C. Meditation is a means of transformation. “Seeing” is looking with the eyes of our heart at what the Holy Spirit reveals to us (Rom. 11:8; Eph. 1:18; Rev. 3:18). He loves to reveal Jesus who is the only perfect human being and the image of the invisible God. *We become what we behold*—this is a Kingdom principle. Through learning to meditate (behold), we *cultivate a spirit of revelation, grow in fascination and draw closer to God*.

18 But we all, with unveiled face, beholding...the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord. (2 Cor. 3:18)

IV. HOW TO ENGAGE IN CHRISTIAN MEDITATION

A. There are five simple ways we can engage God and let the Holy Spirit escort us into the depths of the knowledge of God (1 Cor. 2:8–10). *Read it, Write it, Say it, Sing it, Pray it (RWSSP)*.

B. *Read it* – Read the verse several times slowly. As you read it let the individual words touch your heart (Deut. 30:14; Rom. 10:8). Give yourself time while you do this as you may think nothing is happening. Don't let your familiarity with a Biblical passage keep you from meditating on it. The Word is much deeper than we are accustomed to experiencing. Select a short verse, phrase or one word of Scripture.

C. *Write it* – Write the verse exactly as it is written. Writing the Word of God will help you to slow down and process it. Write it down more than once. Journal thoughts that come to mind. Write your questions. By journaling your thoughts and questions, you are “inquiring” of the Lord and “gazing upon His Beauty” (Psalm 27:4). This is what sitting at Jesus' feet is about as you let Him teach you (Luke 10:39, 42).

D. *Say it* – Say the verse or phrase out loud. Say it loud enough that your ears can hear it. Paul said, “Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God” (Rom. 10:17). As you repeat the verse or phrase over and over again, certain words will start to leap out at you. As they do, begin a dialogue with the Lord why.

E. *Sing it* – Singing is a means to unlock the heart. Take your isolated phrase and sing it over and over again. You can use the melody that you hear playing in the prayer room. As Mike Bickle says: The Prayer Room is a “singing seminary.” (Cf. Col. 3:16). Singing is a way to personalize the message and engage your heart. Write out what you sense and perceive.

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F. *Pray it* – Take the truths in that passage, personalize them and pray them back to God. Ask help in applying them. Ask Him to show you more. We minister to God as priests by internalizing His Word and praying it back to Him with heart-felt agreement (faith). Praying His Word back to Him is a way to grow communion with God.

G. Schedule time to meditate. It's not natural to meditate and let the Word come alive in you. It takes discipline.

V. MEDITATION TOOL - OUTLINE YOUR PAGE USING THESE SECTIONS

A. *Tasks Column* (label the far right side of your paper). This is your distraction list created to give your mind permission to be undistracted to remain focused (e.g. My emails, what's for dinner, I have to use the bathroom, forgive me Lord, I can't do this, etc...) This helps you guard your mind by eliminating traffic. Don't fight these distractions but write them down and release them.

B. *Pursuits or Study Column* (label the bottom section of your paper). The content written here is what you will meditate on LATER. If something comes to mind that reminds you of a verse or topic you want to look up, write it down, look it up LATER. This keeps you from cross-referencing so that you can more easily stay focused on the phrase you've chosen to meditate on. However, should a Biblical phrase or verse come to mind that further gives you understanding on your verse at hand then write it in your meditation section.

C. *Meditation Section* (the biggest section in the middle of your paper). Write "Meditation" on the top line. Write the verse on the next line. For example: Psalm 27:4, ***"One thing I have asked and that will I seek; to dwell in the house of the Lord all of my days, to gaze upon His beauty, and to inquire of Him in His temple."***

1. Select a phrase or passage upon which to meditate. Close your Bible. For example: "One thing I desire." (Your phrase can be as short or long as you would like for it to be.) Write your phrase under the verse and then lock in on that phrase for the duration of your scheduled meditation time.
2. Under the written verse and phrase write/draw insights and revelation received. *Your content could be questions, thoughts, pictures, impressions, new thoughts, insights and even songs.* Interact with the Lord by asking more questions and continuing to be with Him in what He shows you. After you've completed one meditation, time pick another phrase and go for it again! Use the same phrase again if you like. The riches of the Lord are unsearchable and yet He has made Himself available to be known and wants to be sought out.

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| Scripture Text: | Tasks / Other Distractions: |
| Meditation: | |
| Pursuits / Cross-references for later: | |