

Going Deeper: Meditating on One Passage of Scripture

Steve Midgley

Christian Meditation

- Much misunderstood



Going deeper...?

Mindfulness



Strive to focus on the present.

Going deeper...?

Christian Meditation

- Much misunderstood
- Long established

Christian Meditation

By... meditation, I intend the thoughts of some subject spiritual and divine, with the fixing, forcing, and ordering of our thoughts about it, with a design to affect our own hearts and souls with the matter of it...

In meditation our principal aim is the affecting of our own hearts and minds with love, delight, and [humility]. John Owen, Spiritual Mindedness

Christian Meditation

*Blessed is the man
who walks not in the counsel of the wicked,
nor stands in the way of sinners,
nor sits in the seat of scoffers;
but his delight is in the law of the Lord,
and on his law he meditates day and night.*

Psalm 1:1-2

Christian Meditation

- Much misunderstood
- Long established
- Sorely missed

Christian Meditation

A Christian without meditation is like a soldier without arms, or a workman without tools. Without meditation, the truths of God will not stay with us; the heart is hard, and the memory slippery, and without meditation all is lost.

Thomas Watson

Speaking personally...

1. The nature of Christian meditation

...and how it differs from Bible study

Christian Meditation

As the Bee that dwells and abides upon the flower, to suck out all the sweetness that is in the flower; so to meditate upon God and Christ, and the Sacrament, it is to dwell upon God, and the Sacrament, to suck out all the sweetness we can in the things we meditate upon.

Edmund Calamy, The Art of Christian Meditation

2. The impact of Christian meditation

... how it leads us to prosper

Christian Meditation

*But his delight is in the law of the LORD
and on his law he meditates day and night.*

*He is like a tree
planted by streams of water
that yields its fruit in its season,
and its leaf does not wither.
In all that he does, he prospers.*

Psalm 1:2-3

2. The impact of Christian meditation

... how it leads us to prosper

... how it stirs our imaginations

Christian Meditation

*I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and **to know this love that surpasses knowledge**—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.*

Ephesians 3:17-19, NIV

Christian Meditation

Meditation is the form of thought that is appropriate to revealed mystery. If the mystery were not revealed, thought would not be possible. Then the voiding of our minds might be appropriate. But if God's revelation were a simple matter of fact, the intensity of meditation might seem foolish.

Meditation is demanded by the revelation of wonders that go beyond our ability to comprehend.

Edmund Clowney, Christian Meditation

2. The impact of Christian meditation

... how it leads us to prosper

... how it stirs our imaginations

... how it shapes our affections

Christian Meditation

Study is the finding out of a truth, meditation is the spiritual improvement of a truth; the one searcheth for the vein of gold, the other digs out the gold. Study is like a winter sun that hath little warmth and influence: meditation... melts the heart when it is frozen, and makes it drop into tears of love.

Thomas Watson

Christian Meditation

If we settle for mere speculations and mental notions about Christ as doctrine, we shall find no transforming power or efficacy communicated unto us thereby. But when, under the conduct of spiritual light, our affections do cleave unto him with full purpose of heart, our minds fill up with thoughts and delight in him—then virtue [change in character] will proceed from him to purify us, increase our holiness, strengthen our graces, and to fill us sometimes with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

John Owen, Meditations & Discourses on the Glory of Christ

3. The practice of Christian meditation

...and how it relates to prayer

Christian Meditation

Prayer fastens meditation upon the soul; prayer is a tying a knot at the end of meditation that it doth not slip; pray that God will keep those holy meditations in your mind for ever, that the savour of them may abide upon your hearts.

Thomas Watson

Luther on meditation

Instruction – something to believe

Thanksgiving – praise of God in relation to this

Confession – admit failing in relation to this

Petition – ask for something in relation to this

A worked exercise: Psalm 23

- Read
- Meditate
- Pray
 - Praise
 - Confession
 - Petition

Christian Meditation

It is not he that reads most; but he that meditates most, that will prove the choicest, sweetest, wisest, and strongest Christian.

Thomas Brooks