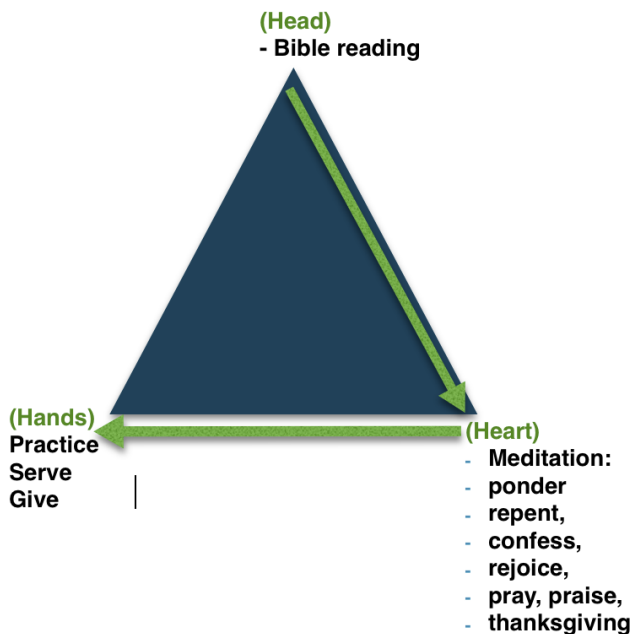


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Reading 1. Using The Means of Grace: Bible Reading | Meditation | Prayer



Because we live in an age of overabundance of information, it's easier to just skim the pages of the Bible or quickly read through it, and assume we know it. But too often, there is a gap—a missing link—between Bible reading and prayer. This is called *meditation*. The great danger in Bible reading and devotion is that our hearts can remain religiously cold if we do it to quickly tick it off from our to-do-lists of the day.

Paul, for instance, said to Timothy: “*Think over what I say, for the Lord will give you understanding in everything*” (2 Tim. 2:7).

Or “be transformed by the *renewal of your mind*” (Rom. 12: 2). So understanding the truths of the gospel happens when we “think over what” God says in His Word, and a transformed life comes about by the “renewal of [our] mind” according to the Word. Thus the word meditation simply means: thinking over it, pausing long enough to mull it over, reflect, ponder, and chew on it until our hearts start to be in awe of who God is and what He has done. We ponder until the truth of God shines, and peace and warmth starts to overcome us as our affections are awakened.

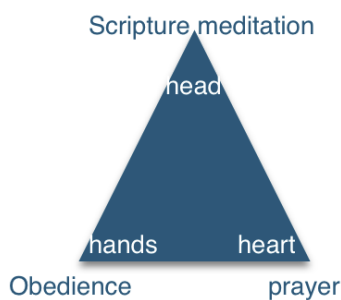
Meditation does not require that we read large portions of scripture (like a chapter). Rather, meditation focuses on slow, breathe in and breathe out, process of savoring the text we are reading for the day. Thus, it's about zooming in to the text and staying long enough time in the presence of God and fasting from the urge to rush off to our to-do-lists of the day. It is just like eating food slowly and savoring it.

The Psalmist in Psalms 1: 2, says that “his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night.” But no one has ever meditated on God's law *day and night 24/7 undistracted* without failure. We know this text is ultimately pointing forward to Christ who always delights in the law and meditates on it day and night. So it is only as we come to Christ who has fulfilled all the law on our behalf, and has succeeded where we have failed, can we learn to meditate on God's law (without feeling condemned or fearing punishment for failing to do so). **See next page for exercise.**

## Read, Meditate, Pray, Journal, and Act.

- a) Why is scripture meditation so important?  
 b) What is the goal of meditation?

“3. For though we walk in the flesh, we are not waging war according to the flesh. 4. For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds. 5. We destroy *arguments* and *every lofty opinion* raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ”—(2 Cor. 10)



### Answer:

a) There is spiritual warfare in our flesh (v. 4). There are “strongholds” (v. 4) and “arguments and prideful opinions” in our mind and heart (v. 5). These arguments and opinions are prideful because they are against the knowledge of God. There are also doubts, fears, anxieties, idols of the hearts, that go against the knowledge of God in our hearts. Therefore, we can destroy them by divine power as we meditate on scripture.

- b) The goal of meditation is to “take every thought captive to obey Christ” (v. 5). The goal of meditation is not only to remove doubts, fears, anxieties, by the divine power in scripture. The goal is to “take every thought captive to OBEY CHRIST.”

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# Below are a few questions we can use to help us discover and enjoy the truths of the gospel during our private time alone with God.

1. What does this verse say about the character and nature of God? (e.g, His holiness, love, sovereignty, grace, divine patience etc).
2. How does the verse address my sin/ fallen condition?
3. What is the verse commanding me to do, but I can't do or fail to do?
4. How does this verse speak to my motives?
5. How does this verse lead me to repent on heart idolatry?
6. How does the verse point me to Christ and (*lead me to rest on*) His finished work on the cross?
7. How does this verse lead me to praise and thank God?
8. How does this verse inform, guide and enrich my prayer today?
9. Why might God be showing me this today?