

# Giving Oneself to Studying and Meditating



## Lesson # 1: The Importance and the Purpose of Meditation

### Learning Objectives

1. Each student will learn what it means to meditate.
2. Each student will be enlightened about the history of meditation.
3. Each student will learn the importance of meditating on God's word.
4. Each student will learn the benefits of meditation.

### I. God gives Joshua a commandment...

*" This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success." Joshua 1: 8*

This verse encapsulates many principles which we will strive to understand as we embark on this study of meditation. It tells us who should be meditating, it tells us what we should meditate on, it gives us an example of when to meditate, it tells us the purpose for which we meditate and it tells us the benefits of meditation.

### II. Defining Meditation...

#### To Meditate:

**(A)1. To empty or concentrate the mind:** to empty the mind of thoughts, or concentrate the mind on one thing, in order to aid mental or spiritual development, contemplation, or relaxation

**2. To think carefully about something:** to think about something carefully, calmly, seriously, and for some time

**3. To plan something:** to plan or consider doing something

## **(B) Biblical Meaning:**

Genesis 24:63 – [07742- *suwach*]

to meditate, muse pensively, commune.

Joshua 1:8, Psalm 1:2, Psalm 63:6, Psalm 77:12 - [01897- *hagah*]

to moan, growl, to ponder, to utter, muse, mutter, meditate, devise, plot,

Psalm 119:15, 119:23, 119:48, 119:78 – [07878- *siyach*]

to put forth, mediate, muse, commune, speak, ponder, sing, to put forth thoughts, to consider

1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 4:15, Acts 4:25 – [3191- *meletao*]

1) to care for, attend to carefully, practice 2) to meditate i.e. to devise, contrive (used of the Greeks of the meditative pondering and the practice of orators and rhetoricians)

Luke 21:14 – [4304- *promeletao*]

to meditate before hand, premeditate

Strong's Concordance

Meditation is a deliberate or an intentional act with a specific objective(s). It is used for various purposes including Religion, Education, Therapy, Health, to Relieve Stress, Hypnosis, etc.

### **III. A Brief History of Meditation...**

Meditation is both an ancient spiritual practice and a contemporary mind-body technique for relaxing the body and calming the mind. Although there is not a lot of recorded information dealing with the history of meditation, its roots can be traced back to ancient times. Researchers speculate that even primitive societies may have discovered altered states of consciousness and meditative states while staring into the flames of their campfires.

Until recently, the primary purpose of meditation has been for religious reasons, although the health benefits of meditation have long been recognized in cultures where methods of meditation originated.

Research shows that the initial practice of meditation began about 5000 years ago within eastern religions such as Buddhism and some found in India.

Meditation spread to Western society thousands of years after it had already become firmly rooted in eastern cultures. Its widespread popularity in the United States didn't begin until the mid-20th century. In the 1960s and 1970s, many college professors and scientific researchers began to test the effects of meditation and learned about the multitude of benefits it affords to physical, mental and emotional health.

Meditation is the first mind-body intervention to be widely adopted in mainstream health care in Western society and around the world. Various techniques of meditation are now widely taught in medical settings such as VA clinics and hospitals. Meditation is often prescribed as a healing technique for relaxing the body and calming the mind, as it has done since the beginning of recorded history. Meditation is currently being used to treat anxiety, pain, depression, insomnia, and even cardiovascular disease and cancer, among others.

[www.Buzzle.com](http://www.Buzzle.com), The Long History of Meditation Is Evidence of Its Benefits. 2006

#### **IV. Why should we meditate on God's Word?**

For the Christian, meditating on God's word daily is an essential and a vital part of his/her walk with Christ. To be a disciple means to be a follower. We must all be well acquainted with what we are all charged to follow, that is, the Word of God. Bible Study and Meditation are spiritual exercises through which we obtain knowledge about God's word that is necessary for living life as a Christian and having a Christ-like Spirit.

##### **A. There is instruction to do so-**

Joshua 1: 8,

As Joshua faced the tremendous task of conquering Canaan, he received instruction and encouragement from the Lord. To enjoy prosperity and to be successful the scriptures indicate that he was told to do three things.

1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 4:15

Timothy was encouraged by Paul to do several things, which included meditation, so that he could overcome his fear and his disposition of being young.

## **B. There are examples of Meditation as a spiritual exercise-**

Genesis 24: 63- Isaac went out into the field to meditate.

Psalm 1: 1-2, Psalm 63:6 – The Psalmist, David, declares that he will meditate on God in chapter 63. In chapter 1 he paints a picture of what a “blessed man” looks like.

## **C. Knowing the Word of God-**

Colossians 3:16, James 1:22, Psalm 119:105, 2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy 2:15.

Application of the Word of God depends upon our knowledge and our understanding. These factors are a direct result of constant Prayer, Bible Study and Meditation.

## **C. So that we may not sin against the Word of God-**

Psalm 119:11 -The Psalmist records that he internalized and rejoiced in God’s Word so that he could remain morally and spiritually pure.

## **D. So that our Profiting may appear to all/ to be Useful-**

1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 4:15- Timothy is encouraged *to give complete attention* to these matters so that he would grow and it would be apparent to everyone.

Mark 16; 15-16- To be used as a preacher of the Gospel, we must know the Gospel. The preaching of the Gospel is essential to the saving of mankind.

## **E. So that we may be pleasing unto God-**

Psalm 19:14- The act of pleasing God here is hinged upon the subject or the focus of our meditation.

## **F. To defend the Faith-**

Jude 1:3, 1<sup>st</sup> Peter 3:15

The task of standing up for the word of God becomes impossible if we as Christians are not knowledgeable about the word of God. We are charged to contend for the faith but we must be adequately acquainted with what we are charged to defend.

## **G. To effectively apply God's Word to our Lives- Luke 4 (The Temptation of Christ)**

Christ, our ultimate example, shows us how to use God's Word effectively after internalizing it through prayer, bible study and meditation. He stood against the devil with the power of God's word, echoing the fact that "... *it is written...*"

**F. The Purification of the Heart-** Proverbs 4:23, Proverbs 27:19, Colossians 3:1-2, Luke 6: 45, Matthew 15: 15-20.

Our actions are directly influenced and shaped by our thoughts, intentions and desires. No matter what service we perform for God, or what we appear to be to others, the purity of our inner self is of utmost importance (our motives, intentions). [1<sup>st</sup> Samuel 16:7] It dictates the sincerity and the authenticity in which we do these things. When we meditate on God's word, we train our hearts/ our minds to think on and to dwell on good things. Here is the simplicity of it all; if we spend our time thinking and meditating on Godly things or pure things, there would be no room for those thoughts or intentions that are evil.

## **V. Some Benefits of Meditation...**

**A. To be Blessed-** Psalm 1: 1-2

**B. To Be Prosperous/ To have Good Success-** Psalm 1: 1-3, Joshua 1: 8

**C. Courage-** 1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 4:15

**D. To Bear Fruit-** Psalm 1: 3. Galatians 5:22 -23

## **VI. Self Reflection Assignment...**



We have learnt that meditation can be achieved easily whether intentionally or unintentionally. For the next week, carefully consider what things that you spend most of your time thinking about and keep a journal of them and how they may be impacting your life. Come prepared to share your findings with the class if you desire.

## VII. Memory Verses...

Psalm 119:11

*"thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee."*

Psalm 19:14

*"Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable, in thy sight, oh Lord, my strength and my redeemer."*

## References

1. The Holy Bible
2. The New Strong's exhaustive Concordance of the Bible
3. The Bible Knowledge Commentary by Cook Communications Ministries
4. The Encarta Encyclopedia
5. [www.blueletterbible.org](http://www.blueletterbible.org)
6. [www.buzzle.com](http://www.buzzle.com)
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## NOTES

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