

Inspirationally Praying the Word

The Beauty of the Lord

I sense the intense desire of the Holy Spirit to take a whisk broom and dust off some of *The Lost Treasures of the Body of Christ* and present them as brilliant gems to gaze upon. Like a spiritual archaeologist or perhaps something like a modern-day Indiana Jones of the fabled movies, let's search through the treasure chest of God and church history and bring these jewels to the forefront once again.

Madame Jeanne Guyon, in her classic book, *Experiencing God through Prayer*, preserved great treasures for us from the past and we get to bring them forward in our day. She brought forth the following concepts: "In 'beholding the Lord,' you come to the Lord in a totally different way. ... As you come before the Lord to sit in His presence ..., beholding Him, make use of the Scripture to quiet your mind. First, (prayerfully) read a passage of Scripture. Once you sense the Lord's presence, the Scripture has been wonderfully used to quiet your mind and has now brought you to Him."

One of the "lost arts" being recovered is growing more intimate with our Lord and gazing upon His beauty. It is the time-tested model often referred to as Christian reflective or meditative prayer. So let's start there for now and build upon these understandings.

Toward a Working Definition

Elmer L. Towns—Vice president of *Liberty University*

"Christian Meditative Prayer is about God, it is meditation that will change your life because you focus on God—and when you experience God, it is God who changes you."

Peter Toon—Author of *Meditating as a Christian*

“Meditation is ... (t)hinking about, reflecting upon, considering, taking to heart, reading slowly and carefully, prayerfully taking in, and humbly receiving into mind, heart and will that which God has revealed.”

Dietrich Bonhoeffer—German author of *The Way to Freedom*

“Just as you do not analyze the assets of someone you love, but accept them as they are said to you, then accept the word of Scripture and ponder it in your heart, as Mary did. That is all.”

Dr. Sam Storms—Author and founder of Enjoying God Ministries

“(Christian) Meditation, then, is being attentive to God. It is a conscious, continuous engagement of the mind with God. This renewing of the mind (Rom. 12:1-2) is part of the process by which the Word of God penetrates the soul and spirit with the light of illumination and the power of transformation.”

7 Guidelines for Meditating on God’s Word

The following seven guidelines all begin with the letter “P” are those that I have gleaned over the years from multiple authors and sources.

Memorize a Bible verse each day.

Prepare Yourself—Always begin by practicing the presence of the living God. Perhaps reading and chewing on Psalm 139:1-10 will help. Focus your attention on God’s inescapable presence, the intimate nearness of God Himself. Remember, we want to encounter the living Word of God. Now select your Scripture text.

Peruse the Word—By this I mean read, repeat the reading, write it out, re-write it, etc. Read your verse(s) aloud ever so slowly and marinate in their beauty.

We must keep in mind the difference between informative reading of the Scriptures and formative reading. The former

focuses on the collecting information and the increase of knowledge. The purpose of the latter is to be formed or shaped by the Word by the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

Picture the Passage—Sanctify your thoughts and desires by the blood of Jesus. Then apply your surrendered natural senses to the truth contained within the Scripture verse. Then in worship to the One True God, Jesus Christ the Lord, let the Holy Spirit fill your senses—your entire being (Heb. 5:14). Personally engage in a relationship with the Holy Spirit to encounter or experience what the text speaks. Hear, feel, taste, smell and see the truths God reveals.

Ponder the Truths—Reflect on the truth of the Word; brood over the truth of the chosen Scripture; absorb it, soak in it, as you turn it over within your heart and soul. By all means, internalize and personalize the passage. Let the Word of God speak to you!

Pray the Word—This is now one of my favorite parts of the process. Take the truths, which the Holy Spirit has illuminated, and now pray them back to God, whether in petition, thanksgiving, intercession, spiritual warfare or declaration. I often sing my Scripture-based prayers back to God. It adds oil to the entire dynamic.

Praise Him!—Worship the Lord for who He is, what He has done and how it has been revealed in Scripture. Offer thanksgiving and the sacrifice of praise. Meditation ought always to lead us into adoration and celebration of the personhood of God Himself.

Practice His Presence—Commit yourself to doing what the Word of God commands. The aim of inspirational reading of the Word of God is transformation. The ultimate aim of Scripture-praying is pleasing God, fellowshiping with Him and obedience (see Josh. 1:8; Ps. 119:11).

Keeping It Simple

Remember:

1. Think on these things.
2. Ponder deeply.
3. Behold the rich love of God.
4. Muse on the works of His hands.
5. Meditate.
6. Consider.
7. Let the mind of Christ be in you.
8. Set your mind on things above.
9. Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly.

BENEFITS OF INSPIRATIONAL PRAYING THE WORD

The Benefits of Scriptural Meditation

1. You gain insight and instruction of truth (Ps. 119:99, 2 Tim. 2:7).
2. You get a positive outlook on life (Ps. 104:34).
3. You deepen your love for the Scriptures and God (Ps. 119:97).
4. You become prosperous as you apply the insights gained (Josh. 1:8).
5. You grow and become stable in the Christian life (Ps. 1:2,3; John 15:4).
6. You develop a strong prayer life (John 15:7).
7. You are motivated to ministry (1 Sam. 12:24; 1 Tim. 4:15).
8. You are motivated to repent and live better (Ps. 39:3, Rev. 2:5).
9. You find the peace of God (Phil. 4:8-9).
10. You get a clear focus to guide you in making decisions (Matt. 6:33, Col. 3:2).
11. You focus your life on Christ (Heb. 12:3, 1 John 3:1).
12. You worship God in His majestic glory (Deut. 4:39).

Pray Without Ceasing

The Blessings of Scriptural Praying

1. Divine Protection: Psalm 91:1
2. Heart's Desire: Psalm 37:4
3. Joy of the Lord: Psalm 104:34
4. Peace of God: Isaiah 26:3
5. Overcoming Anger: Psalm 4:4
6. Overcoming Fear: Deuteronomy 7:17-19
7. Overcoming Sin: Psalm 119:11
8. Renewed Mind: Romans 12:2
9. Stability: Psalm 37:31
10. Wisdom: Psalm 49:3

THE GOAL: GETTING TO KNOW THE NEARNESS OF GOD

Getting Comfortable With God

Many of us struggle with resting and waiting in God's presence, perhaps because we think He has something against us or we are just too busy. While He calls us into change, He does so by wrapping His arms of love all around us. God delights in hug therapy.

This might take some time before you learn to trust that the best place to be is in your Father's arms. But this will happen. Why? Because He is more committed to the journey than you are! So come on in and commune with Him. Encounter Him. He is waiting for you.

Let This Be Our Prayer

"Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord; seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His won glory and excellence. For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you may become partakers of the divine nature" (2 Pet. 1:2-4).

Our Father, in the majestic name of Jesus, I declare that I to know You as intimately as You know me. Draw me nearer, nearer, nearer, precious Lord, to Your ever-loving side. Identify the hard places in my heart and send forth Your Word, which shatters every rock. Give me a greater hunger for the written and living Word of God. By the ministry of the Holy Spirit and Your great grace, and by the power of the shed blood of the Lamb, set me apart and make me wholly Yours. I declare that the chief end of my life is to glorify You and enjoy You forever! Amen and Amen!

James W. Goll *is the founder of Encounters Network and Prayer Storm. He has written over 50 books and study guides and taken the power, presence and love of God to over 50 nations. Visit for more information.*