

Spiritual Disciplines of the Christian Faith (CM2)

***Lecture 2 – Bible Study & Meditation**

**Ross Arnold, Winter 2013
Lakeside institute of Theology**

Spiritual Disciplines of the Christian Faith (CM2)

1. Introduction to Christian Spiritual Disciplines
2. Bible Study & Meditation
3. Prayer & Journaling
4. Fasting & Simplicity
5. Worship & Confession
6. Service & Stewardship
7. Silence & Solitude
8. Conclusion: Practicing the Disciplines; Final Exam

The REAL Question...

How does one live the Spirit-filled life promised by Jesus in the New Testament?

What are the “Spiritual Disciplines?”

- Spiritual disciplines are practices that we willingly pursue in response to a God who created us, saved us, and guides us. Spiritual disciplines draw us closer to God, deepen our understanding of who he is, and help make us into the men and women he desires us to become.

Why is the Bible is Important

“The BIBLE -- banned, burned, beloved. More widely read, more frequently attacked than any other book in history. Generations of intellectuals have attempted to discredit it, dictators of every age have outlawed it and executed those who read it. Yet soldiers carry it into battle believing it more powerful than their weapons. Fragments of it smuggled into solitary prison cells have transformed ruthless killers into gentle saints.”

Charles Colson

“The BIBLE holds up before us ideals that are within sight of the weakest and the lowliest, and yet so high that the best and the noblest are kept with their faces turned ever upward. It carries the call of the Savior to the remotest corners of the earth; on its pages are written the assurances of the present and our hopes for the future.”

William Jennings Bryan

Why is the Bible is Important

“The BIBLE is God's chart for you to steer by, to keep you from the bottom of the sea, and to show you where the harbor is, and how to reach it without running on rocks and bars.”

Henry Ward Beecher

“I believe the BIBLE is the best gift God has ever given to man. All the good of the Savior of the world is communicated to us through the Book. But for it, we could not know right from wrong?”

Abraham Lincoln

To the BIBLE men will return; and why? Because they cannot do without it.”

Matthew Arnold

What we believe about the Bible

● Revealed

- This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: 'Write in a book all the words I have spoken to you. Jeremiah 30:2-3

● Inspired

- All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, ¹⁷ so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work. 2 Timothy 3:16-17

● Authoritative

- For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, ⁴ that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, ⁵ and that he appeared to Peter, and then to the Twelve. 1 Corinthians 15:3-5

● Living

- For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart. Hebrews 4:12

Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. ⁵ Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. ⁶ These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. ⁷ Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. ⁸ Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. ⁹ Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates.

Deuteronomy 6:4-9

But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, ¹⁵ and how from infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. ¹⁶ All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, ¹⁷ so that all God's people may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

2 Timothy 3:14-17

“No Spiritual Discipline is more important than the intake of God’s Word. Nothing can substitute for it. There simply is no healthy Christian life apart from a diet of the milk and meat of Scripture. ...

“Regardless of how busy we become with all things Christian, we must remember that the most transforming practice available to us is the disciplined intake of Scripture.”

Donald S. Whitney

Aspects of “Scripture Intake”

1. Receiving God’s Word

Hearing

Reading

2. Meditating on God’s Word

“What is God saying to me?”

3. Studying God’s Word

Observation, Interpretation,
Meditation, Application

4. Memorizing God’s Word

He replied, “Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and obey it.”

Luke 11:28

Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word about Christ. *Romans 10:17*

And we also thank God continually because, when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as a human word, but as it actually is, the word of God, which is indeed at work in you who believe. *1 Thessalonians 2:13*

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Christian Meditation can be defined as “deep thinking on the truths and spiritual values revealed in Scripture for the purpose of understanding, application and prayer.”

Donald Whitney

“Christian Meditation, very simply, is the ability to hear God’s voice and obey His word.”

Richard Foster

Christian meditation is to focus our minds on God and the things of God, especially as found in Scripture, and to answer the question, “What is God saying to me?”

Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked or stand in the way of sinners or sit in the seat of mockers.

² But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night.

³ He is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither.

Whatever he does prospers.

Psalm 1:1-3

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But He answered and said, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.' "

Matthew 4:4

Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

2 Timothy 2:15

Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

Romans 12:2

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I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you. *Psalm 119:11*

Pay attention and turn your ear to the sayings of the wise; apply your heart to what I teach, ¹⁸ for it is pleasing when you keep them in your heart and have all of them ready on your lips.

¹⁹ So that your trust may be in the Lord, I teach you today, even you. *Proverbs 22:17-19*

Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear it and take to heart what is written in it, because the time is near. *Revelation 1:3*

Here, then, is the real problem of our negligence. We fail in our duty to study God's Word not so much because it is difficult to understand, not so much because it is dull and boring, but because it is work. Our problem is not a lack of intelligence or a lack of passion. Our problem is that we are lazy.

R.C. Sproul