

# Scriptural Meditation

**Introduction.** What picture develops in your mind when you hear the word “meditation”? New Age meditation, which became popular in the 1960s and 1970s, is influenced by Eastern philosophy, mysticism, Yoga, Hinduism, and Buddhism. It is rooted in the idea that the youth of that day rebelled against traditional belief systems as a reaction against what some perceived as the failure of the gospel to provide spiritual and ethical guidance. Its purpose is to blank out the mind, thereby releasing oneself from conscious thinking. This is often aided by repetitive chanting of a mantra, or focusing on an object.

Is that what Paul told Timothy to do in 1 Timothy 4:15? Meditation or the act of meditating is mentioned 20 times in the KJV. The biblical sense of the word means to “turn over” God’s word in the mind and heart, to examine or profoundly reflect on it, to compare scripture with scripture, and to “feed on” its truths.

Our battle is with the devil (Ephesians 6:11). James 4:7-8 tells us to resist the devil and draw near to God. How do we do that? One of the best ways is to meditate. Meditation is to the soul what digestion is to the body. Perhaps a big part of the problem in thinking that the gospel has been a failure is the true failure of people to understand and practice scriptural meditation.

During days of noise and confusion, meditation is rare but very needful. This study will observe some of the appropriate objects of scriptural meditation and some hindrances of scriptural meditation.

## I. ***The Objects Of Scriptural Meditation***

- A. Scriptural meditation needs to mimic the attitude of David (Psalm 19:14).
- B. There are several points on which we can meditate:
  1. The laws of God (Joshua 1:8; Psalm 1:1-3; 119:97-99, 148).
  2. The works of God (Psalm 77:11-14; 119:15, 27; 143:5; 145:4-6).
  3. The concerns of God (1 Samuel 12:20, 24; Psalm 8:3-8; 63:6-8; 103:1-5).
  4. The ways of man (Psalm 119:59; Isaiah 55:6-9; Lamentations 3:40-41; Haggai 1:3-9).
  5. The good parts of life (Matthew 6:28-30; Philippians 4:8).

## II. ***The Hindrances To Scriptural Meditation***

- A. Psalm 1:1-3 declares that a righteous person “meditates” regularly. The previous point noted some appropriate subjects for such scriptural meditation. But let’s look at some hindrances to meditation and some suggested ways to overcome them:

1. Skepticism -- Those who associate all meditation with false religions will be skeptical about doing it. However, we can know for certain that scriptural meditation has God's approval (Joshua 1:1, 8; Psalm 119:59; Philippians 4:8).
  2. Inexperience -- Those who have no previous meditation experience might be hesitant about starting this "new" activity. However, maturing spiritually means doing something different than what was done in the past (2 Corinthians 5:17; 1 Peter 2:2; 2 Peter 3:17-18).
  3. Arrogance -- Those who arrogantly think of themselves as being exempt from the need for more godliness will reject the need for meditation. But, do not let pride hinder you from thinking deeply about spiritual topics (Proverbs 12:15; 26:12; Romans 12:3, 16; 2 Corinthians 10:12, 18).
  4. Distractions -- Everything around us can distract and prevent meditation. Thus, we need a quiet place to concentrate without being interrupted (Genesis 15:7-11; 1 Kings 19:9-12; Matthew 6:6; 14:23).
  5. Time limitations -- We only have a set amount of hours in which to complete all of our daily activities. Set aside some of your limited time specifically for scriptural meditation (Ecclesiastes 3:1-8; Ephesians 5:15-17).
  6. Preconceptions -- Clinging to our preconceived ideas and beliefs makes genuine meditation impossible. Instead, give serious thought to all topics in an unbiased, open-minded manner (John 7:45-53; 9:18-23; Acts 17:10-11).
- B. Study involves learning facts and gaining knowledge. Meditation builds on that foundation. When we meditate properly, we add to our understanding of the subject by examining its meaning, its context, its application, etc. Thus, all hindrances to scriptural meditation are also obstacles to our spiritual growth and maturity (1 Corinthians 14:20).

**Conclusion.** Ignatius wrote, "The Devil cannot take from the soul the light of faith: he, however, removes the light of consideration, so that the soul may not reflect on what it believes." Hopefully, these studies will encourage you to continue or to begin meditating on the scriptures. We want to "look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen" (2 Corinthians 4:18).