

(Guidelines) Meditate on the Bible

by J. Vernon McGee

Meditation is a lost art today, but it is essential for understanding and applying the Word of God to our lives.

Duration: 13:14

Scripture: Deuteronomy 6:6-9, Isaiah 53:6-7, John 3:16, Acts 8:35

Topics: "Bible Meditation", "Spiritual Growth"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of meditating on the word of God. He laments how television has replaced the spiritual life of many families, with children now knowing TV commercials better than Bible verses. The speaker references Deuteronomy 6:6-9, where God commands His people to meditate on His word and teach it diligently to their children. He shares a personal anecdote about a man who owned a Coca-Cola plant, who explained the significance of repetition in advertising by asking when was the last time the speaker saw a package of Arbuckle coffee. The speaker concludes by highlighting the power of constantly keeping the word of God before us, writing it in our homes, and allowing it to shape our hearts and lives.

Transcript

Now, that leads me to the fourth very important guideline for the study of the Scriptures, and that is, meditate on the Bible. Meditate on the Bible. Meditation is something that God taught His people.

The Word of God was to be before the children of Israel all the time so that they could meditate on it. And let me give you that passage of Scripture over in the 6th chapter of Deuteronomy, verses 6 through 9. Listen to this very carefully. And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart, and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up, and thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes, and thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house and on thy gates.

You see, the Word of God was to be kept before them. It was to be written in their homes, on the doorposts and the lintel over the door. It was to be that which they talked about when they ate, went down at night, and probably had a little difficulty getting off to sleep.

And it presented this is the most amazing statement that so far we've considered that the Lord has given. He told them to write the Word of God everywhere, and it would be burnt into their hearts and lives. Now

today, we've forgotten about that.

Oh, every now and then you see a verse of Scripture stuck up, and unfortunately today, written in a way that's difficult to read, and it's not presented in a dignified way. Somebody comes down the street in an automobile, an old beat-up jalopy, and a verse of Scripture written on it. You can hardly read the thing.

I always feel humiliated when I see that. And then I look at the liquor advertisements. My, how dignified they are given out.

And I rode out Wilshire Boulevard with a friend and called his attention to the number of billboards that are liquor signs. That's all they are. And I said, no wonder so many people in Southern California drink.

This thing is burnt into their minds and hearts. Everywhere they turn, why, here it is, right there before them. Drink this, drink that.

And it all adds up to one thing. There is something wrong with you if you don't drink liquor. That's what they're trying to tell you.

They give you the impression that the intelligent are the ones who drink, and the oddballs do not. Now, when I was growing up as a boy, it was the opposite, that there's something wrong with the drunkard. Today he's just sick.

He's not a sinner at all, and that he just needs a little revamping of a few of his axons and dendrites, and then he'll be in a position to drink in a normal sort of way. And after all, what is normal drinking? This is something that I think is very important to see. Meditate on the Word of God.

And there was the man that was formerly in my church down in Cleburne, Texas, and this man, he owned the Coca-Cola plant. He owned it there and in two other places in Texas. And one day I was riding across the square in our little town, and I was going down to his place, and I went over to him and I said to him, you know, I said, I counted 13 Coca-Cola signs on the square.

I said, do you have to tell people 13 times on the square about Coca-Cola when everybody already knows about it? And then he said this to me. He said, when was the last time you saw a package of Arbuckle coffee? Well, I said, I don't recall of seeing a package of Arbuckle coffee since I was a boy. He said, that's it.

He said, years ago, Arbuckle coffee was advertised as much as Coca-Cola. And then the people who made the coffee thought, well, everybody knows about Arbuckle coffee, and they quit talking about it. They quit advertising.

They cut down on it. And he said, now, he says, nobody knows about Arbuckle coffee. And he says, Coca-Cola feels like that a certain percentage, and you'd be amazed how much out of each bottle of Coca-Cola they sell, how much of that goes into advertising.

Now, they feel like they've just got to keep saying it. And certainly certain soap products feel like they have to keep saying it. And certainly cigarettes, they have to keep saying it with the silliest type of advertising.

May I say to you, God says His Word ought to be given prominence. Now, if you and I are to understand the Word of God, we must meditate on the Bible. I know a great many people.

Family is, of course, divided during the day. The wife listens to the program at home. The husband listens to it at work.

And of the evening at the dinner table, they discuss what was covered that day in the Bible. May I say, that's meditation. Go back over it again and again.

Well, what do you think about when you don't have anything else to think about? Now, I find riding along in the car alone, and I make quite a few trips by myself, I find out that's a good time to take a passage of scripture and to think about it, to give thought to it at that time. Someone asked a man once, says, When you can't sleep at night, do you count sheep? He said, No. He says, I talk to the shepherd.

Well, that's what God's people are asked to do. That is, God asks His people to meditate on His Word. Now, what does it mean to meditate on the Word of God? Well, there's a very graphic statement that's made in the first psalm.

Let me read the first two verses. Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful, but his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in his law doth he meditate day and night. Now, that word meditate, I'm told, is actually a picture of a cow chewing her cud.

Now, you know the old cow goes out of a morning, and while the grass is fresh with dew, she eats the grass. Then when the sun comes up and the grass is warm and the weather is hot, the old cow gets under a tree and lies down or stands there in the shade, and you see her chewing, and you wonder, What in the world that cow is chewing? Well, they say that she's chewing her cud. Well, she's actually meditating, my friend.

You see, we're also told that a cow has several stomachs, so of a morning she eats the grass rather hurriedly, stores it in one tummy, and then in the afternoon when it's hot, she meditates upon it. She chews the cud. She transfers it from one tummy to another, and she chews it over again.

May I say to you that we need to learn to do that in our thought processes in studying the Word of God. We need to take that which we've read and that which we've studied and meditate upon it. And that's one of the most valuable things that you can do.

Now, of course, as a preacher, I've had some advantage here over most of you, and I think here's where a preacher, a teacher of the Word has a tremendous advantage over other folk, is this, that in preparing a message, many times I'll take a verse of scripture and spend hours doing nothing in the world but just reading it over and over and reading what others have said and just keep reading it. And finally, it's a marvelous thing that I find that new truth will break out from that particular passage. I remember hearing Dr. Harry Ironside years ago say that he had heard a lecturer in a seminary in Chicago, a lecturer on the Song of Solomon, and he gave quite a liberal interpretation, which put Solomon in a very bad light, by the way.

And even the record that is clear makes Solomon bad enough, and we do not need to paint him any darker than he really is. But he was not satisfied, and he said that he went and read the Song of Solomon again, got out on his knees and asked God to give him an understanding of it because he didn't have, and he did that again and again. In fact, he did it for weeks and months.

And finally, new light broke from that book, and I generally give his interpretation of the Song of Solomon for two reasons. It satisfies my mind and my heart more than any other interpretation that I have heard. And then the second thing is, I know the man who did it spent a great deal of time in meditation.

And meditation is really a lost art today. And again, may I say, that we let it go at devotions, and 30 minutes after devotions, a man riding to work and the housewife sweeping the kitchen or washing the dishes, I have a notion if you'd ask either one of them what it was they read at the breakfast table, they couldn't tell you. We need to learn to meditate on the Word of God, how important that is.

That Ethiopian eunuch riding along, reading Isaiah. He was actually studying Isaiah because he's in a passage with which he's having trouble, and he didn't know what it meant. He went over it and over it again.

And here comes along this man, Philip. And Philip, guided by the Spirit of God, it says he began at that scripture and he preached unto him Jesus. And just think of when he got to that particular passage of scripture that he was a sheep led to the slaughter.

All we like sheep have gone astray. We've turned every one to his own way, and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. I'd love to have been there that day and heard Philip.

How we need to meditate on the Word of God. And that is, frankly, where television is absolutely blotting out and changing the spiritual life of many families. There are a great many boys and girls today that formerly in the home they would have known John 3.16, and they could have sung Jesus Loves Me, but now they can sing that silly TV commercial about a certain soap or about a certain something else.

They know that and even the tune of it as well as the words, but they can't sing Jesus Loves Me. May I say to you that one of the reasons today that our churches are becoming colder and colder and more indifferent to the Word of God is just simply because there is that lack of meditation upon the Word of God. And as we go through the Bible, this time again, learn to meditate upon it.

And I trust that you will continue to meditate on the Word of God. By the way, these folk who write in a long time after I've made a certain tape on a certain passage of Scripture, and they ask a certain question or some suggestion someone makes, reveal that folk are meditating upon the Word of God.

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