



The Biblical Practice of Meditation



Why have this class?

Obedience. The bible commands us to meditate. What does that mean? Are we adept? What should we avoid?

Splendor. Are your thoughts delightful? Beautiful? Glorious? Is that even possible?

Wisdom. To help us understand God's word, His ways, and His world.

Class Roadmap (tentative)

- A Brief Survey of the Scriptures
- The Significance of Our Thoughts
- What is a Biblical Definition of Meditation?
- Examples of Counterfeit Practices of Meditation
- How to Meditate
- The Subject Matter of Meditation
- How to Meditate
- Objections and Hindrances

Lesson 1: A Brief Survey of the Scriptures

Joshua's Charge

Joshua 1:8 This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.

The opening of the Psalter

Psalm 1:1-2 Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stands in the path of sinners, nor sits in the seat of the scornful; 2 But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in His law he meditates day and night.

Psalm 2:1 Why do the nations rage, and the people plot a vain thing?

A few other Psalms

Psalm 63:6 When I remember You on my bed, I meditate on You in the night watches.

Psalm 77:12 I will also meditate on all Your work, And talk of Your deeds.

Psalm 115:7 They have hands, but they do not handle; Feet they have, but they do not walk; Nor do they mutter [speak] through their throat.

Psalm 143:5 I remember the days of old; I meditate on all Your works; I muse [ponder] on the work of Your hands.

Isaac's walk

Genesis 24:63 And Isaac went out to meditate in the field in the evening; and he lifted his eyes and looked, and there, the camels were coming.

Muse, pray, went out to walk in a field, went forth into the plan, etc.

Psalms - siah family

Psalm 77:12 I will also meditate (haga) on all Your work, And talk (siah) of Your deeds.

Psalm 119:15 I will meditate on Your precepts, And contemplate Your ways.

Psalm 119:23 Princes also sit and speak against me, But Your servant meditates on Your statutes.

Psalm 119:27 Make me understand the way of Your precepts; So shall I meditate on Your wonderful works.

Psalm 119:48 My hands also I will lift up to Your commandments, Which I love, And I will meditate on Your statutes.

NT - logizomai

Philippians 4:8-9 Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy – meditate on these things. 9 The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you.

Alternate: think, dwell, consider, keep your thoughts

NT - phroneo

Colossians 3:1-3 If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. 2 Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. 3 For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.

Romans 8:5-7 For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. 6 For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. 7 Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be.

NT - katanoeo

Hebrews 3:1 Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, Christ Jesus,

NT - symballo

Luke 2:19 But Mary kept all these things and pondered them in her heart.

“Pondered” is very popular.

God’s Word: Mary treasured all these things in her heart and always thought about them.

Good News: Mary remembered all these things and thought deeply about them.

New American: And Mary kept all these things, reflecting on them in her heart.

Warning

If you don't think too good, don't think too much. -- Ted Williams

Lesson 2: The Significance of Our Thoughts

Random Assortment on the Mind

Matthew 22:37 love the Lord your God ... with all [whole] your mind.

Mark 3:21 He is out of His mind.

Mark 5:15 sitting and clothed and in his right mind.

Acts 14:2 But the unbelieving Jews ... poisoned their minds

Acts 17:11 These were more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica

Romans 1:28 God gave them over to a debased mind .. 29 evil-mindedness

Random Assortment on the Mind

Romans 8:6 For to be carnally minded is death

Romans 15:5 to be like-minded toward one another, according to Christ Jesus,

2 Corinthians 5:13 if we are of sound mind, it is for you.

2 Corinthians 8:19 to show your ready mind,

Philippians 2:3 but in lowliness of mind

Colossians 2:18 vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind,

Random Assortment on the Mind

2 Thessalonians 2:2 not to be soon shaken in mind or troubled

1 Timothy 3:2 A bishop then must be ... sober-minded

1 Timothy 6:5 useless wranglings of men of corrupt minds

James 1:8 he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.

2 Peter 3:1 ... I stir up your pure minds by way of reminder

Evil Thoughts

Mark 7:17-23 When He had entered a house away from the crowd, His disciples asked Him concerning the parable [what enters a man defiles him]... 21 For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, 22 thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lewdness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness. 23 All these evil things come from within and defile a man.”

Futile Thoughts

Ephesians 4:17-24 This I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord, that you should no longer walk as the rest of the Gentiles walk, *in the futility of their mind*, 18 having their *understanding darkened*, being alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart; 19 who, being past feeling, have given themselves over to lewdness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.

20 But you have not so learned Christ, 21 if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught by Him, as the truth is in Jesus: 22 that you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, 23 and be *renewed in the spirit of your mind*, 24 and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.

Beastly

Job 18:3 Why are we counted as beasts, and regarded as stupid in your sight?

Psalms 49:20 A man who is in honor, yet does not understand, is like the beasts that perish.

2 Peter 2:12 But these, like natural brute beasts made to be caught and destroyed, speak evil of the things they do not understand, and will utterly perish in their own corruption, ...

Jesus Came to Reveal Thoughts

Luke 2:33-35 And Joseph and His mother marveled at those things which were spoken of Him. 34 Then Simeon blessed them, and said to Mary His mother, “Behold, this Child is destined for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign which will be spoken against 35 (yes, a sword will pierce through your own soul also), that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.”

Sweetness

Psalm 104:31-35

May the glory of the Lord endure forever; May the Lord rejoice in His works.
32 He looks on the earth, and it trembles; He touches the hills, and they
smoke. 33 I will sing to the Lord as long as I live; I will sing praise to my
God while I have my being. 34 May my meditation be sweet to Him; I will be
glad in the Lord. 35 May sinners be consumed from the earth, And the
wicked be no more

Sweetness

Malachi 3:4 Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem *will be pleasant to the Lord,*

Proverbs 15:8 The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord, *but the prayer of the upright is His delight.* 9 The way of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord, but He loves him who follows righteousness.

Revelation 5:8 And when he had taken it, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb. Each one had a harp and they were holding golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of God's people.

What is man?

What did you hear me say about man as a thinking being?

Is he only a thinking being? Does he have a heart, soul, will, affection, desire, body, etc?

Yes, he has all of this and more.

Man is a complex being with many facets.



Lesson 3: What is Biblical Meditation?

What We've Covered

- 1) In both the OT and NT, the idea and practice of meditation (though not always with that word) is presented as the chief means men are to employ in their relationship with God.
- 2) Our thoughts are significant and what takes place in our minds is important; it is not morally neutral. Our thinking matters and will be either sweet and delightful before God or evil and futile.

Assorted Definitions

Meditation is a serious intention of the mind whereby we come to search out the truth and settle it effectually upon the heart. -- Thomas Hooker

Meditation is a settled exercise of the mind for a further inquiry of the truth, and so affecting the heart therewith ... -- William Fenner

Meditation is the serious exercise of the understanding, whereby our thoughts are fixed on the observation of spiritual things in order to practice.
-- William Bates

Assorted Definitions

Divine meditation ... is a serious, solemn thinking and considering of the things of God, to the end we might understand how much they concern us, and that our hearts thereby may be raised to some holy affections and resolutions. -- Thomas White

Meditation is a serious, earnest, and purposed musing upon some point of Christian instruction, tending to lead us forward toward the Kingdom of Heaven, and serving our daily strengthening against the flesh, the world, and the devil. -- John Ball

Breakdown

Each of these definitions has at least three parts:

- 1) The approach: serious, solemn
- 2) The content: truth, spiritual things
- 3) The application: settling, affecting, warming ... the heart

Wide Agreement

Meditation ... is a holy exercise of the mind whereby we bring the truths of God to remembrance, and do seriously ponder upon them, and apply them to ourselves. -- Thomas Watson

Meditation is a deep and earnest musing upon some point of Christian instruction, to the strengthening up against the flesh, world, and devil, and to the leading us forward toward the Kingdom of Heaven; or, Meditation is a steadfast bending of the mind to some spiritual matter, discovering of it with our selves, till we bring the same to some profitable issue. -- Isaac Ambrose

Wide Agreement

Meditation is of that happy influence, it makes the Mind wise, the Affections warm, the Soul fat and flourishing, and the Conversation [life, lifestyle, conduct] greatly fruitful. -- Nathanael Ranew

Meditation ... is a bending of the mind upon some spiritual object through divers forms of discourse, until our thoughts come to an issue ... -- Joseph Hall

Wide Agreement

Meditation is the vehement motion of the understanding, for that is the leading faculty in this duty... is a serious inquiry made after some hidden truth, when the soul purposeth to enrich itself with the treasures of knowledge ...the end whereof is to bring the soul to a serious detestation of sin, to a closing with, and embracing of the will of God: this is that I intend to treat of, and it is like blowing of the coals to warm the soul... -- William Bates

John Owen

By disciplined meditation, ... pondering ... spiritual subject in an orderly, disciplined way. The purpose ... is to rouse the heart and soul to feel the goodness or badness of the subject being pondered... is different from Bible study ... the chief aim is to learn the truth and to declare it to others... is different from prayer -- for prayer is directed to God. The aim ... is to arouse our hearts to experience a sense of love, delight, and humility... is different from being spiritually-minded... People may be skilled in spiritual thoughts [but who are also un]disciplined... is an art that must be learned.

It needs the use of natural faculties and abilities that, through weakness and ignorance, some have not adequately developed.

The Mind is Not the End

Grace breeds delight in God, and delight breeds meditation. Meditation is a duty wherein consists the essentials of religion, and which nourishes the very life-blood of it... Meditation is the chewing upon the truths we have heard. Meditation is like the watering of the seed, it makes the fruits of grace to flourish. -- Thomas Watson

Talking While You Chew

The word meditate or muse means to "think upon" or "reflect." "While I was musing the fire burned," David said (Ps. 39:3). It also means "to murmur, to mutter, to make sound with the mouth.... It implies what we express by one talking to himself." A person involved in such meditation would recite aloud to himself in a low undertone passages of Scripture he had committed to memory. -- A Puritan Theology, Beeke & Jones

Lesson 4: Non-Biblical Practices of Meditation

What We've Covered

- 1) In both the OT and NT, the idea and practice of meditation (though not always with that word) is presented as the chief means men are to employ in understanding God and His world
- 2) Our thoughts are significant and what takes place in our minds is important; it is not morally neutral. Our thinking matters and will be either sweet and delightful before God or evil and futile.
- 3) Meditation is defined as having a serious, or solemn bending of the mind to the truth or spiritual things to the end that we might settle, affect, warm, and rouse the heart in our relationship to God.

The Early Church



Transcendental Meditation



Yoga

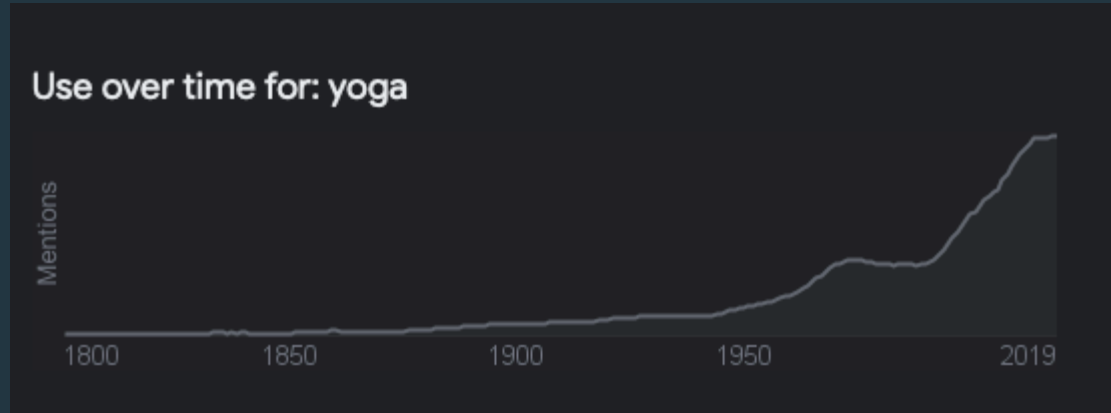
“... a Hindu spiritual and ascetic discipline, a part of which, including breath control, simple meditation, and the adoption of specific bodily postures, is widely practiced for health and relaxation” -- Mr. Google



Y O G A

Pose of the crescent moon

Yoga. Gaining in Popularity?



Higher Consciousness

<This is an actual picture of higher consciousness>

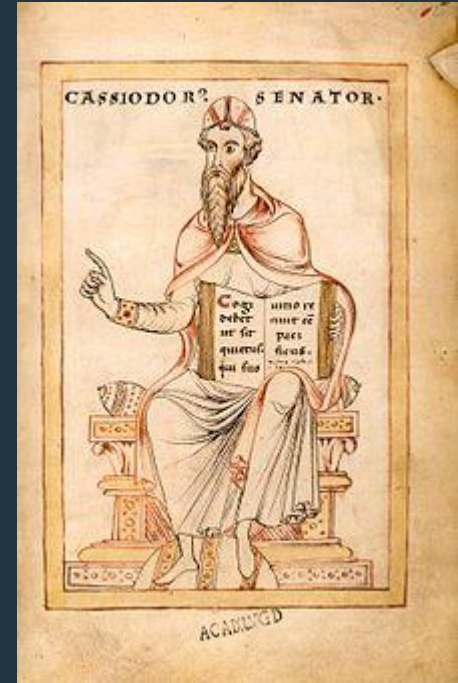
Monkey Mind



Cassiodorus (485-585 AD)

For Cassiodorus, Psalm 68 “is a river to be drunk by the mind ...which ever irrigates without watering; it inebriates pure minds, and brings back to mental sobriety those who are drunk on sins ... Let us pray that this stream may uninterruptedly possess us.”
Amen.

What does this even mean?



#Strange #Bizarre

- 1) nirodha samāpatti, aka hibernation
- 2) Superhumans: The remarkable brain waves of high-level meditators
- 3) Mindfulness meditation
- 4) The Rise of the Mindful Museum
- 5) Lost in Thought -- psychosis

Anatta vs Self-Denial

“In Buddhism, there is a central theme or concept of anatta, meaning non-self.”

vs

Matthew 16:24-26 Then Jesus said to His disciples, “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me.”

Conclusion

- 1) God made you in His image.
- 2) God has revealed much.
- 3) Rouse the heart.
- 4) Don't be fooled

Lesson 5: The Subject Matter of Meditation

Where Have We Been?

- 1) Survey. What words do the Scriptures use to describe meditation and related concepts?
- 2) Thoughts. How does the Bible describe the importance (good and bad) of our thoughts?
- 3) Define. How do you define the way meditation is practiced in the Bible?
- 4) Counterfeits. What counterfeits to biblical meditation do we see around us? What makes them non-biblical?

The Subject Matter of Meditation

- search out the truth
- further inquiry of the truth,
- the observation of spiritual things
- the things of God
- Christian instruction

All of this is true, but not very precise.

We need help ... and help has arrived

WCF 1.1 Although the light of nature, and the works of creation and providence, do so far manifest the goodness, wisdom, and power of God, as to leave men inexcusable; yet are they not sufficient to give that knowledge of God, and of his will, which is necessary unto salvation; therefore it pleased the Lord ... to reveal himself, and to declare that his will unto his Church ... to commit the same wholly unto writing; which makes the holy Scripture to be most necessary.

Creation

Psalm 19:1-4, 14 The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament shows His handiwork. 2 Day unto day utters speech, and night unto night reveals knowledge. 3 There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard. 4 Their line has gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world... 14 Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Your sight, O Lord, my strength and my Redeemer.

Wrath Revealed

The result:

- They became futile in their thinking
- They did not retain God in their knowledge [understanding]
- They received a debased mind

Providence

Psalm 77:11-12 I will remember the works of the Lord; Surely I will remember Your wonders of old. 12 I will also meditate on all Your work, and talk of Your deeds.

Lesson 6a: How To Meditate

Two Types or Occasions

- 1) Regular, deliberate
- 2) Special, short, extemporaneous, cursory
 - Isaac, Genesis 24, evening
 - Psalm 1, day and night
 - **Psalm 77:6** I will remember my song in the night. I will meditate with my heart.
 - **Proverbs 6:20-22** My son, keep your father's command, and do not forsake the law of your mother. 21 Bind them continually upon your heart; tie them around your neck. 22 When you roam, they will lead you; when you sleep, they will keep you; and when you awake, they will speak with you.

Lesson 6b: How To Meditate

Where Have We Been?

- 1) Survey. What words do the Scriptures use to describe meditation and related concepts?
- 2) Thoughts. How does the Bible describe the importance (good and bad) of our thoughts?
- 3) Define. How do you define the way meditation is practiced in the Bible?
- 4) Counterfeits. What counterfeits to biblical meditation do we see around us? What makes them non-biblical?
- 5) What are the two types of occasions for meditating?

Preparation

1. Proceed from faith.
2. Trust that God has promised to assist you and will perform His duty.
3. View meditation as a duty of great consequence.
4. Fix a time.
5. Plan for a sufficient duration of time.
6. Find a place to be solitary. This isn't a group exercise.

Content: Bible (Read)

1. Read material appropriate to your current circumstances. Depressed? Anxious? Uncertain? Discontent? Bitter?
2. Start with stuff you can understand.
3. Identify the amount of material you can read and meditate on. Chapter divisions are arbitrary.

Content: Bible (Study)

1. What is happening?
2. Who are the people? Why are they there?
3. Where is God? What is He doing?
4. Who is acting? Who is acted upon?

Content: Bible (Apply)

1. Study is not meditation; study precedes meditation.
2. Think: ingesting and digesting
3. How can I rouse my heart with this material?

What questions can you ask yourself while meditating?

Hall's Scale of Preparation and Proceeding in Understanding

1. Question: What I [think, should think]
2. Excussion: A repelling of what I should not think
3. Choice or Election: Of what most [necessary, expedient, comely]
4. Commemoration : An actual thinking upon the matter elected.
5. Consideration: A redoubled commemoration of the same till it be fully known
6. Attention: A fixed and earnest consideration, whereby it is fastened in the mind.
7. Explanation: A clearing of the thing considered by similitudes.
8. Traction: An extending the thing considered to other points, where all questions of doubts are discussed.
9. Dijudication: An estimation of the worth of the thing thus handled.
10. Causation: A confirmation of the estimation thus made.
11. Rumination: A sad and serious meditation of all the former, till it may work upon the affections.

Lesson 6c: How To Meditate

Where Have We Been?

- 1) Survey. What are a few words used in Scripture describing meditation?
- 2) Thoughts. How is the importance of our thoughts described in the Bible?
- 3) Define. What are the three elements of the Bible's definition of meditation?
- 4) Prepare. What steps can we perform to prepare for meditation?
- 5) Why are reading and studying not the same as meditation?
- 6) Ruminant: How many stomachs does a cow have?

Plain in Themselves

WCF 1:7 All things in Scripture are not alike plain in themselves, nor alike clear unto all: yet those things which are necessary to be known, believed, and observed for salvation, are so clearly propounded and opened in some place of Scripture or other, that not only the learned, but the unlearned, in a due use of the ordinary means, may attain unto a sufficient understanding of them

Unraveling the Word

WCF 1:7 All things in Scripture are not alike plain in themselves, nor alike clear unto all: yet those things which are necessary to be known, believed, and observed for salvation, are so clearly propounded and opened in some place of Scripture or other, that not only the learned, but the unlearned, in a due use of the ordinary means, may attain unto a sufficient understanding of them.



Paronomasia

“A play upon words, a figure in which a word is repeated with a variation in the sense.”

Matthew 8:22 "Follow me, and leave the dead to bury their own dead."

Where is the play?

What are other common figures of speech found in the Scriptures?

Proverbs: Difficult by Design

Proverbs 1:1-6 The proverbs of Solomon the son of David, king of Israel:

2 To know wisdom and instruction, to perceive the words of understanding,

3 To receive the instruction of wisdom, justice, judgment, and equity;

4 To give prudence **to the simple**, **to the young man** knowledge and discretion

5 **A wise man** will hear and increase learning, and **a man of understanding** will attain wise counsel,

6 To understand a **proverb** and an **enigma**, the **words of the wise** and their **riddles**.

No Quick Fix

The truth God Himself conveys to us needs to be pondered a good long while before it can be understood or applied. The form of the teaching defies an immediate and easy explanation.

There are no shortcuts!

Sermons

Why do we have sermons?

DFW:21 “The preaching of the gospel, which is the power of God unto salvation, is central to the work of the ministry ...”

DFW:22 “The sermon is an exposition and application of Scripture ...” (two goals)

WSC:Q90. How is the Word to be read and heard, that it may become effectual to salvation? A. That the Word may become effectual to salvation, we must attend thereunto with diligence, preparation, and prayer; receive it with faith and love, lay it up in our hearts, and practice it in our lives.

Luke 8: The Parable of the Sower

- What are the four types of soil?
- What do each of these types represent?
- How does this relate to meditation?

Lesson 6d: How To Meditate

Meditation on Creation and Providence

God explicitly commands us to meditate on His works of Providence.

Deuteronomy 8:1-2 “Every commandment which I command you today you must be careful to observe, that you may live and multiply, and go in and possess the land of which the Lord swore to your fathers. 2 And you shall remember that the Lord your God led you all the way these forty years in the wilderness, to humble you and test you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not.

Meditation on Creation and Providence

It is our duty because neglecting to remember is a sin.

Psalm 28:3-5 Do not take me away with the wicked and with the workers of iniquity, who speak peace to their neighbors, but evil is in their hearts. Give them according to their deeds, and according to the wickedness of their endeavors; give them according to the work of their hands; render to them what they deserve. 5 Because they do not regard the works of the LORD, nor the operation of His hands, He shall destroy them and not build them up.

Meditation on Creation and Providence

Meditating on God's providence fills us with wonder and awe.

Psalm 105:1-6 Oh, give thanks to the Lord! Call upon His name; make known His deeds among the peoples! 2 Sing to Him, sing psalms to Him; talk of all His wondrous works! 3 Glory in His holy name; let the hearts of those rejoice who seek the Lord! 4 Seek the Lord and His strength; seek His face evermore! 5 Remember His marvelous works which He has done, His wonders, and the judgments of His mouth, 6 O seed of Abraham His servant, You children of Jacob, His chosen ones!

Meditation on Creation and Providence

Psalm 111:2-4 The works of the Lord are great, studied by all who have pleasure in them. 3 His work is honorable and glorious, and His righteousness endures forever. 4 He has made His wonderful works to be remembered; the Lord is gracious and full of compassion.

Providence and Attributes

WSC4 Q: What is God? A: God is a Spirit, infinite, eternal, and unchangeable, in his being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth.

The Psalms as Meditations

Psalm 1 Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stands in the path of sinners, nor sits in the seat of the scornful; 2 but his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in His law he [b]meditates day and night.

Psalm 8 O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is Your name in all the earth, who have set Your glory above the heavens!

Psalm 73 Truly God is good to Israel, to such as are pure in heart. 2 But as for me, my feet had almost stumbled; my steps had nearly slipped. 3 For I was envious of the boastful, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked.

Discussing Your Meditations

Malachi 3:16 Then those who feared the Lord spoke to one another, and the Lord listened and heard them; so a book of remembrance was written before Him for those who fear the Lord and who meditate on His name.

Lesson 7: Obstacles and Takeaways

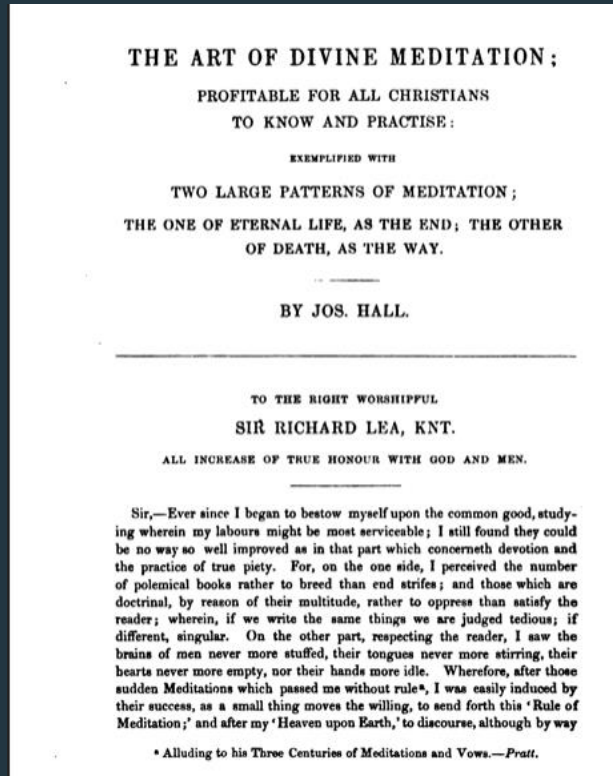
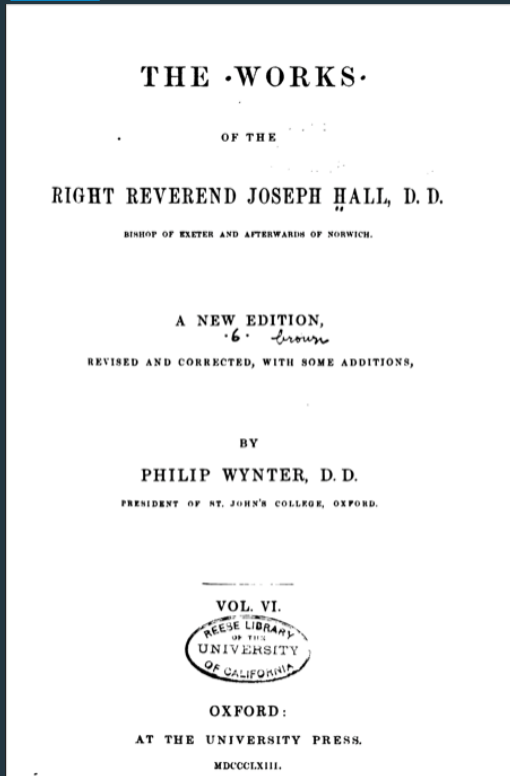
Last Class!

Obstacles

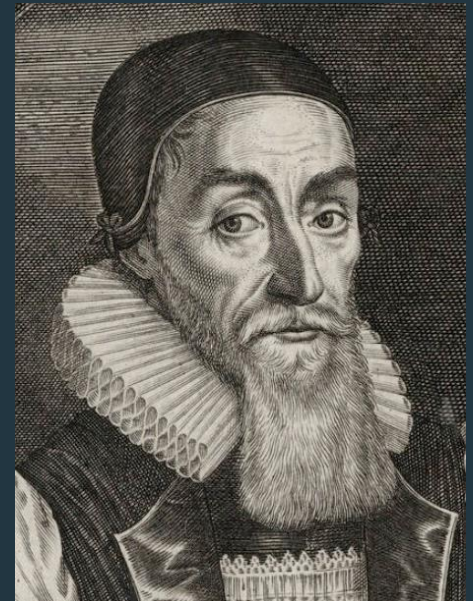
10 of My Top Takeaways

Your Thoughts

10) The Puritans thought a great deal about meditation.



Joseph Hall (1 July 1574 – 8 September 1656)



10) The Puritans thought a great deal about meditation.

A faithful and succinet Narrative of some late and wonderful SEA-DELIVERANCES.

THE PREFACE.

IT is a certain truth, that religion doth not expose all to public view; and as true, that it doth not impropriate and conceal all within the limits of a man's private breast. To expose all would be pharisaical, and to conceal all would be highly injurious and uncharitable; by the former a man wrongs himself, and by the latter many others.

Some works of providence have a designation for general use and public good in the very nature of them; such I apprehend these to be, which are contained in the following narratives.

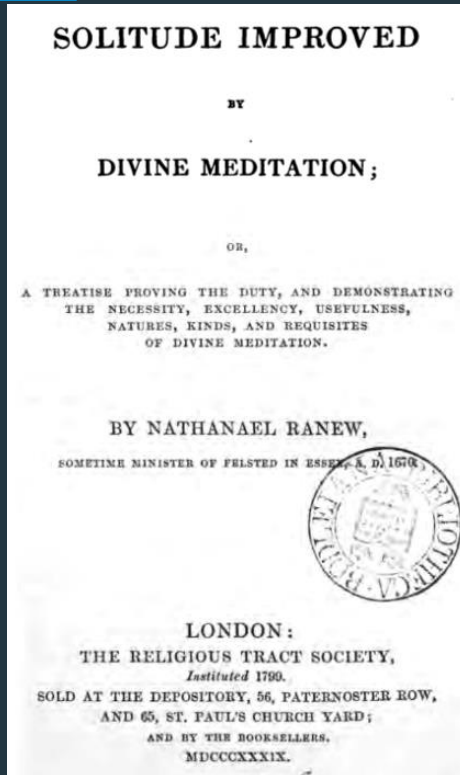
It is said, the art of physic was advanced and perfected in this manner. In the ruder and more ignorant ages of the world, when a person, either by design or accident, had discovered the virtue of any herb or mineral, the experiment was posted up in some public place for all to read, and take notice of it; till at last, out of the multitude of these posted experiments, an orderly system was framed, wherein every thing was reduced to its proper place and use.

I am convinced, that if an orderly collection were made of the

John Flavel (c. 1627–1691)



10) The Puritans thought a great deal about meditation.



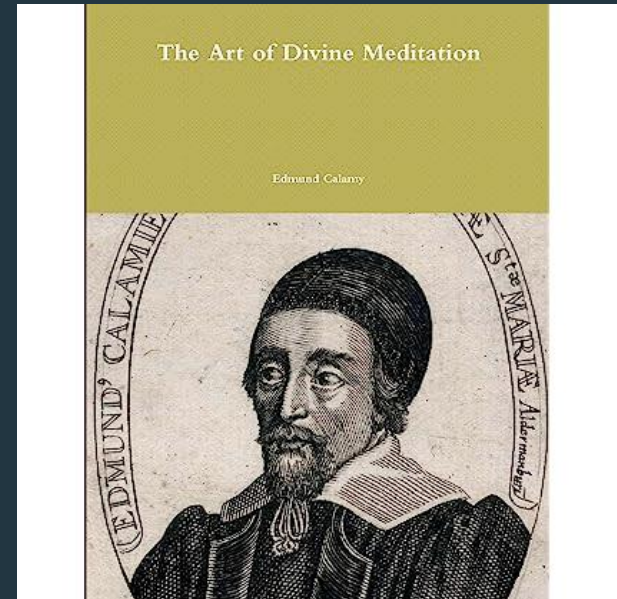
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Nathanael Ranew
(1602 - 1677) TOC = 4 pages



10) The Puritans thought a great deal about meditation.

THE ART OF DIVINE MEDITATION
OR,
A DISCOURSE OF THE
Nature, Necessity, and Excellency thereof.
With Motives to, and Rules for the better performance
of that most Important Christian Duty.

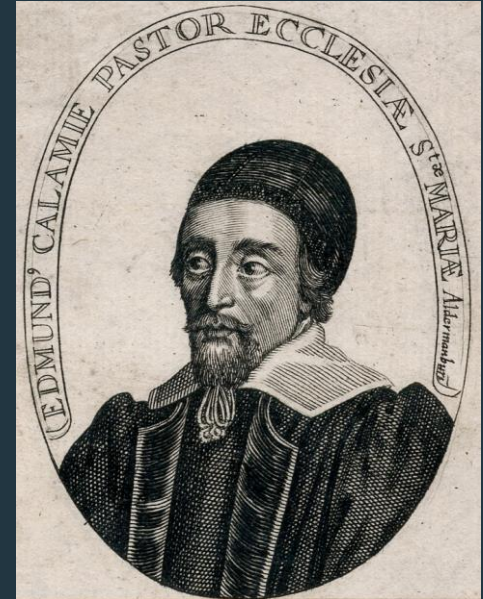
IN SEVERAL SERMONS On Genesis 24:63:

*“And Isaac went out to meditate in the fields at the
even-tide.”*

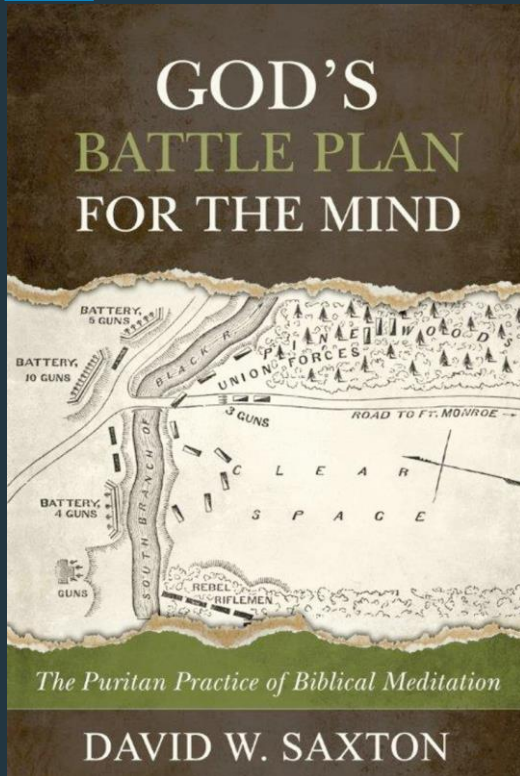
By EDMUND CALAMY, B. D. late Minister of
Aldermanbury, London.

LONDON: Printed for Thomas Parkhurst, and are to be
sold at his shop at the Bible and three Crowns in
Cheapside near Mercers Chapel, and by I Collier, at the
Bible on Londonbridge under the gate, 1680.

Edmund Calamy (February
1600 – 29 October 1666)

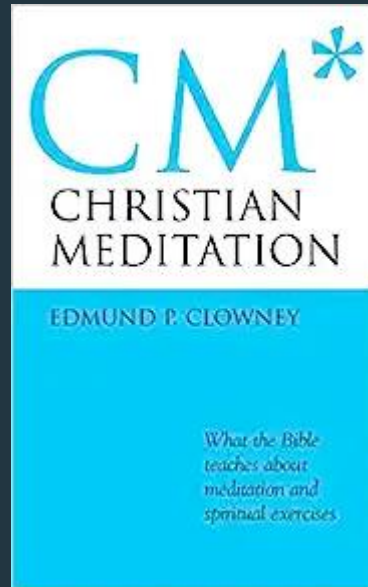


Contemporary Works on Meditation

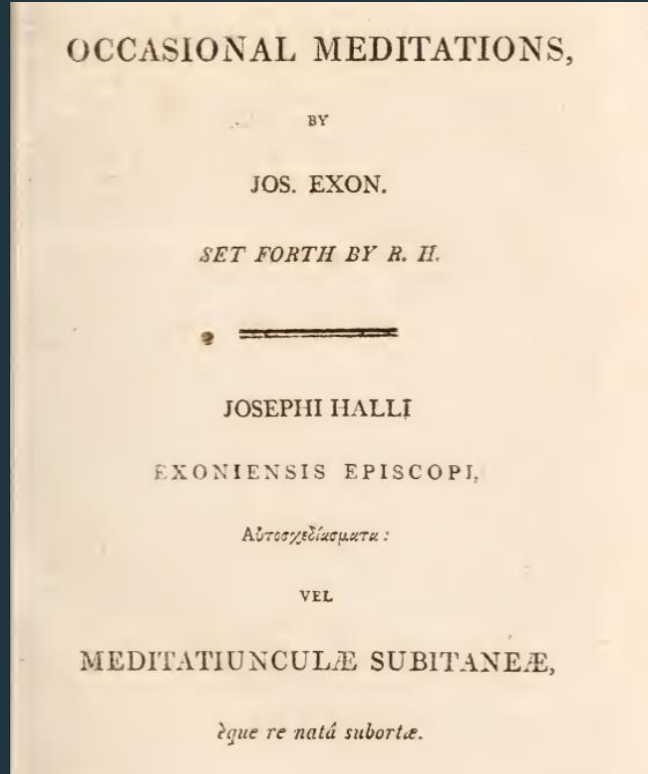
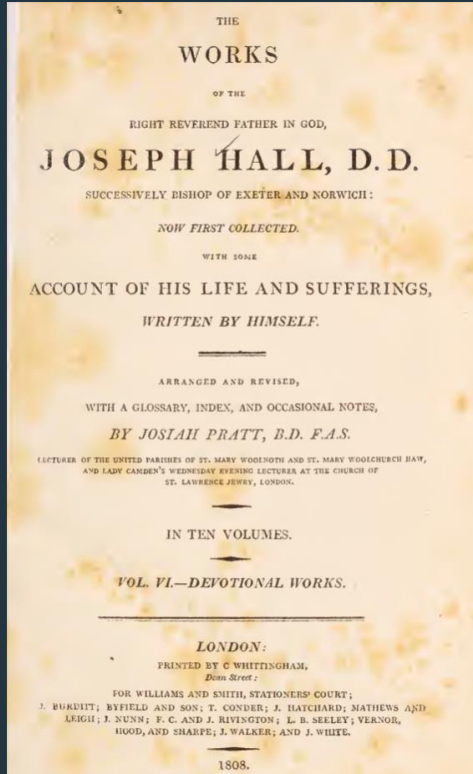


Battle Plan, 2015

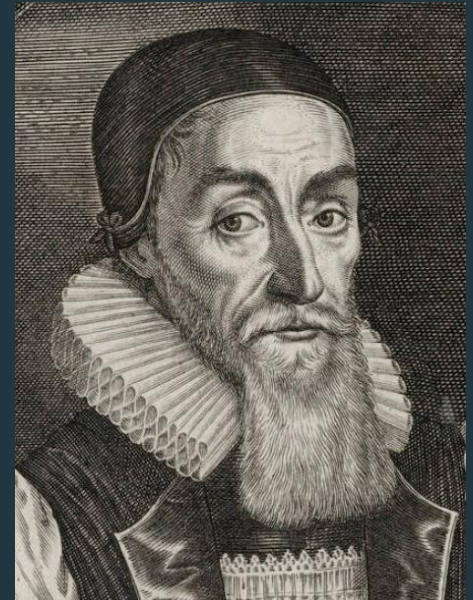
Christian Meditation, 1979



9) The Puritans could meditate on just about anything.



Joseph Hall (1 July 1574 – 8 September 1656)



9) The Puritans could meditate on just about anything.

Hall. CXXXVII. **On the sight of a dwarf.** Amongst all the bounteous gifts of God, what is it, that he hath equally bestowed upon all; except it be our very being, while we are? He hath not given to all men the same stature of body, not the same strength of wit, not the same capacity of memory, not the same beauty of parts, not the same measure of wealth or honour.

Thus hath he done also in matter of grace. There are spiritual dwarfs there are giants. There are perfect men; children; babes; embryos. This inequality doth so much more praise the mercy and wisdom of the Giver, and exercise the charity and thankfulness of the receiver. The essence of our Humanity doth not consist in stature: he, that is little of growth, is as much man, as he, that is taller. Even so also spiritually, the quantity of grace doth not make the Christian, but the truth of it. I shall be glad and ambitious, to add cubits to my height; but, withal, it shall comfort me to know, that I cannot be so low of stature, as not to reach unto heaven.

9) The Puritans could meditate on just about anything.

Hall

LXXVII On the discharging of a piece

LXXXIII On the sight and noise of a peacock

LXXXIX On the arraignment of a felon

CI On the sight of flies

CIX On the sight of a left-handed man

CXV On the sight of a man yawning

CXXIII On the sight of a hedgehog

9) The Puritans could meditate on just about anything.

DIVINE MEDITATIONS

AND

HOLY CONTEMPLATIONS,

BY THAT REVEREND DIVINE

R. SIBBES, D. D.

Master of Catharine Hall, Cambridge, and
Preacher of Grays Inn, London.

A NEW EDITION, again revised, and published at
the Request of several Eminent Divines.

Inscribed (by Permission) to the Right
Honourable the

COUNTESS of HUNTINGDON,

And Recommended by the Honourable and
Reverend Mr. WALTER SHIRLEY.

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136 DIVINE MEDITATIONS:

men of parts, herein, they glory, not, in
Christ; no, but they reject the riches of
his grace.

337. It is a hard matter to find the least
measure of grace, and the greatest degree
of formality; for, as the portrait often ex-
ceeds the person, so doth an hypocrite of-
ten make a greater shew than the true chris-
tian. The lowest exercise of saving grace
is, in spiritual desires; and these are known
to be saving, if they proceed from a taste
and inward relish of divine things, and
not merely from the object presented in
the word. We must distinguish between
occasional affections stirred up, and our
real general inward frame of soul; for
those emotions suddenly raised, do pre-
sently sink again. The waters in the hot
bath have a natural constant heat, but
common water, when it is heated to a
far greater degree, will soon return again
to its former coldness, and so remain.

338. Though certain of victory over
our spiritual enemies, yet we must conti-
nue the fight. With the devoted kings
of Canaan Israel fought, and all were sub-
dued and slain. Christ our king that fights
for us, fights with us, and will crown us
too, when he hath given us the final vic-
tory. The time will come, soon the day
of triumph come, when we shall say of
all

Richard Sibbes, 338 items
to meditate on in 137 pages.

There are many other
works devoted to
meditation topics. Many of
your favorite Puritan
pastors had suggestions for
their flocks.

10 of My Top Takeaways

8) Believers in the age of the Puritans had trouble finding the time and energy to meditate just like we do.

7) Though Transcendental Meditation is not a significant force in our society today, counterfeits of Biblical meditation are everywhere and largely unlabeled.

6) Meditation is designed to be a powerful tool to disabuse your mind and heart of unbelief.

5) It is okay if your form of meditation looks different from other people's.

Thus have I endeavored ... according to my slender faculty, to prescribe a method of meditation: not upon so strict terms of necessity, that whosoever goeth not my way erreth. Divers paths lead oftentimes to the same end, and every man aboundeth in his own sense. If experience and custom hath made another form familiar to any man, I forbid it not; as that learned father said of his translation, "Let him use his own, not contemn mine." If any man be to choose and begin let him practice mine till he meet with a better master. If another course may be better, I am sure this is good. Neither is it to be suffered, that, like as fantastical men, while they doubt what fashioned suit they should wear, put on nothing ...

-- Joseph Hall, chapter XXXVII, *The Arte of Divine Meditation*, p78

10 of My Top Takeaways

- 4) Meditating on some aspects of Creation and Providence can be quite hard and may take years to gain understanding. Don't let this discourage you.
- 3) In all likelihood, we make the practice of meditation way more difficult than intended.

2) The importance of our thoughts is greater than I realized.

Wherein give me leave to complain, with just sorrow and shame, that if there be any Christian duty whose omission is notoriously shameful and prejudicial to the souls of professors, it is this of meditation. This is the very end God hath given us our souls for: we mispend them if we use them not thus. How lamentable is it, that we so employ them, as if our faculty of discourse served for nothing but our earthly provision! As if our reasonable and Christian minds were appointed for the slaves and drudges of this body, only to be the eaters and cooks of our appetite!

-- Joseph Hall, chapter XXXVII, *The Arte of Divine Meditation*, p78

10 of My Top Takeaways

1) Meditation is delightful.

You are not a beast; You have the capacity to wonder, comprehend, and experience a genuine understanding of the Trinity. It originates, as with all good things, in grace.

How could it be anything else?

Don't Be Overwhelmed!

“For a close, remember this, that your life is short, your duties many, your assistance great, and your reward sure; therefore faint not, hold on and hold up, in ways of well-doing, and heaven shall make amends for all.”

-- Thomas Brooks, *Precious Remedies Against Satan's Devices*