

St Martins C3 – October 26, 2025

Ancient Practices – Scripture Meditation

Sermon Notes:

We are doing a series at the moment called *Ancient Practices*. In the series, we are digging into some of the wisdom from ages past on how to go deeper into the things of God. Today, we look at meditation.

Read Joshua 1:8; Psalm 1:1-3

Intentionally, woven into the fabric of the Bible is the idea that God's people should delight in the words that have been written down and meditate on them (Deuteronomy 6).

The person who does so will be blessed, they'll succeed in God's calling, they will be like a tree planted by streams of water which yields its fruit in season. They will prosper.

Read 2 Timothy 3:16-17

There is power in scripture. Meditating lets these words of life go deeper. Meditating is when we don't just skim past the words of scripture, but we marinate in them and ponder them deeply. The word literally means to "mutter".

When we meditate we allow the truth of God to soak through our life. It brings us God's calm; it gives inner strength; it makes us self-aware; it alerts us to what God's doing; it gives us clarity and focus; it moves our focus towards doing God's will and away from ourselves.

Christian meditation is not about opening our mind, so there is nothing there, but opening our mind to the things of God. It is less of an emptying than it is a filling with God's truth.

We already do this when we worry or continuously ponder an idea or thought. There are three easy steps to doing this:

1 – Select a Verse

Pick any passage of scripture you want. It really doesn't matter. Read the passage (ten-fifteen verses) and as you read, you pray, "God would you please give me something to take into my day." Look for the verse or phrase that "lights up to you."

2 – Basically Understand It

Scripture needs to be correctly understood for it to carry power in our lives. 90% of Biblical misunderstanding would be taken away if we simply read the surrounding verses.

We can also answer three questions:

A – Who was the audience of this passage?

B – What is the main point to these people?

C – What principle would apply to them and me?

3 – Think About It

Once we have selected it and basically understood it, we take the time to focus on those words and think about them ... and think about them ... and think about them. You could do all this in one sitting or over many days.

Meditation overflows into prayer. Prayer turns into action. Before we know it, our lives are shaped by Scripture. Make a plan to practise it this week.

Questions for Connect Groups:

Key Point

Scripture meditation transforms by marinating Christians in God's truth.

Questions

What stood out to you from this week's message?

What does this message tell you about God and humans?

Why do you think that meditating on scripture is said in Psalm 1 and Joshua 1 to bring prosperity and success?

What are the things that you regularly worry, think or ruminate about?

How would it transform us if we spend more time ruminating on scripture than these other things?

Have you tried to meditate on scripture before? How did it go? What difference did it make? What tips do you have on how to practice it?

What would be some good scriptures to meditate on?

What works best for you: meditating at one time and "muttering" as you go throughout the day. Why?

Group Exercise:

Look at day one of the devotional notes and the *lectio divina* exercise. Pick a scripture and take twenty minutes to practice it together.

Monday Devotion: Lectio Divinia

This method of prayer goes back to the early monastic tradition (about 220 AD). There were not Bibles for everyone, and not everyone knew how to read. So, the monks gathered in chapel to hear a member of the community reading from the scripture. This can be done individually or in groups.

The first reading (the text is read twice on this occasion) is for the purpose of hearing a word or passage that touches the heart. When the word or phrase is found, it is silently taken in and gently recited and pondered during the silence which follows. After the silence, each person shares which word or phrase has touched his or her heart.

The second reading is for the purpose of 'hearing' or 'seeing' Christ in the text. How are the various members of the group seeing or hearing Christ reach out to them through the text? Then, after the silence, each member of the group shares what he or she has 'heard' or 'seen.'

The third and final reading is for the purpose of experiencing Christ 'calling us forth' into doing or being. Members ask themselves what Christ in the text is calling them to do or to become today or this week. After the silence, each person shares for the last time; and the exercise concludes with each person praying for the person on the right.

Why not try doing this with your connect group this week or with a friend? If you are doing this individually, then journal what you have thought about.

Tuesday Devotion: Meditating on Creation

Read Psalm 8

There are other things that we can meditate on, not just scripture. Psalm 8 is a great reflection on all of God's creation. David proclaims that when he looks at the night sky, it causes him to reflect on his own mortality and place in the world.

Today, spend some time meditating on God's creation. Go outside for a walk and look at all that God has made. Spend some time picking up a leaf and exploring it. Look at the intricacies that are within it. Consider how this very small part of creation speaks to the wonder of the whole.

Spend some time considering your own body and the way that he has finally crafted you. Spend some time thanking him for your body, even the parts that aren't working the way that they should be!

Go outside at nighttime, and if it is a clear night, look at the moon and the stars. Compare those to the leaf that you've already seen earlier, see the wonder in all the world. As you do, let it draw you towards the creator of all these things. Spend some time praising him and worshipping him for his wonder and his goodness.

Wednesday Devotion: Examen

Read Psalm 63:6

Another ancient Christian meditation practice is called *Examen*. This is a helpful way to reflect on the day and where God was present. Here is how you do it.

1. Become aware of God's presence. Look back on the events of the day in the company of the Holy Spirit. The day may seem confusing to you—a blur, a jumble, a muddle. Ask God to bring clarity and understanding.

2. Review the day with gratitude. Walk through your day in the presence of God and note its joys and delights. Look at the work you did, the people you interacted with. Pay attention to small things—the food you ate, the sights you saw, and other seemingly small pleasures. God is in the details.

3. Pay attention to your emotions. Reflect on the feelings you experienced during the day. Boredom? Elation? Resentment? Compassion? Anger? Confidence? What is God saying through these feelings? Confess any sins to him.

4. Choose one feature of the day and pray from it. Ask the Holy Spirit to direct you to something during the day that God thinks is particularly important.

5. Look toward tomorrow. Ask God to give you light for tomorrow's challenges. Ask him for help and understanding.

Thursday & Friday Devotion: Scripture

Meditation

It has been good this week to look at different types of Christian meditation. But we want to provide space in the next two days to come back to what we talked about in the sermon on Sunday. Review the sermon notes and pick a scripture to meditate upon.

Whether you do it in one sitting or you ruminate and “mutter” about it all day long, commit to devoting yourself to meditating on the Scriptures.

You may want to find a comfortable place to begin, take a few breaths and ask the Holy Spirit to meet you where you are.

Then select your passage, it could be part of your daily reading, or it could be a specific passage you think would work for the exercise. If you are not sure where to go try a Psalm for example Psalm 139, Psalm 86, Psalm 42, Psalm 16, Psalm 84. It really doesn't matter what you choose, but a section of ten-fifteen verses is ideal.

Read the scripture, taking your time to be fully present with the words that you read. To begin just read the passage through, trying to gain a basic understanding of what is happening in the passage and what it means.

(continued over the page).

When a word lights up for you stop and attend. Let the word or phrase roam around in your mind and heart. What do you hear? What feelings do you notice in yourself? Write down any questions that surface. You can attend to these at another time.

Write and think about these things as you go through your day. Let them truly soak into your heart. Focus on the truth that God is wanting to bring to you. These are moments between you and God's Holy Spirit.

As you think about scripture consider all the ways that it interacts with you. Do you share its values? Does it challenge you to do something? Does it call you to have a conversation with someone or change a habit?

Let this draw you into prayer. As you think about elements of the scripture let it draw you to God and honestly talk to him about the things going on in your heart. Pour yourself out to him openly and honestly.

When you have finished meditating on a scripture, finish your time with a prayer. You may even want to write about what you've been ruminating on.

Then why not share it with someone that you know, like your spouse or in your connect group? It may be an encouragement for them, too. Regularly practising this habit will be deeply transformational.