

### **Briefly review 6-25-06 sermon again**

*Romans 12:2—“Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind that you may prove what is the good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God.”*

*“You are not what you think you are, what you think, you are.”*

*Tools for being transformed by the renewing of our minds*

*Time—The Word of God—Prayer—Meditation*

*Meditation = communing with our bridegroom—intimate conversation.*

*Spurgeon quote: “We ought to meditate on the things of God, because we thus get the real nutrition out of them...Our bodies are not supported by merely taking food into the mouth...It is only by digestion that the outward food becomes assimilated with the inner life... **The inward digesting of the truth lies for the most part in meditating on it...** Why is it that some Christians, although they hear many sermons, make slow advances in the divine life? Because they do not thoughtfully meditate on God’s Word...”*

### **Puritan quotes:**

“Faith is lean and ready to starve unless it be fed with continual meditation on the promises; as David says in Psalm 119: 92, ‘Unless thy law had been my delight, I should have perished in my affliction.’ —Thomas Manton

“A Christian without meditation is like a soldier without weapons, or a workman without tools. Without meditation the truths of God will not stay with us; the heart is hard, and the memory slippery, and without meditation all is lost.” —Thomas Watson

“Why so much preaching is lost among us, and professors can run from sermon to sermon, and are never weary of hearing or reading, and yet have such languishing, starved souls, I know no truer or greater cause than their ignorance and unconscionable neglect of meditation.”  
—Richard Baxter

“Meditation is the food of your souls, it is the very stomach and natural heat whereby spiritual truths are digested. A man shall as soon live without his heart, as he shall be able to get good by what he reads, without meditation...It is not he that reads most; but he that meditates most, that will prove the choicest, sweetest, wisest, and strongest Christian.” —Thomas Brooks

Meditation = chewing and digesting = ruminating = “chewing the cud”

Sheep are ruminants.

To ruminate the sheep must bring back up a bolus or cud (portion of food already swallowed) and chew it more fully in order to digest it and get the full food value from it.

Article—“Why are sheep always chewing?”

“Healthy, mature sheep will chew their cud for several hours each day.”

(The amount of cud chewing is an) “indication of the health of the herd.”

Gurnall quote:

(Do not) “allow your mind to dwell on that which you do not want lodged in your heart.”

Psychology Today article—“The Rumination Rut”:

“As you ruminate, you deepen the grooves in the brain...”

“If you are thinking about the problem for more than five minutes, there is a good chance you are a ruminator.”

“A key element in gaining control over thinking that errs on the side of obsession is the technique of distraction through action. When thoughts begin to run away with themselves, it is necessary to break their hold by engaging in action-distraction maneuvers. Go for a walk, go out and garden, go into the kitchen and cook, open a book and read.” [*How about meditating?*]

As Christians, we can use the same principle for our good with meditating.

Col 3: 2---“Set your affections on things above (action), not on things on the earth.” (distraction)

3 x 5 “Cud” cards—Having a verse written out on a 3 x 5 card can be an effective way to force your mind back onto a focus of meditation (chewing the cud). [distraction/action idea]

Trip to Cleveland example—arrived focused and edified [show “cud” holder]

“Heart murmur”

The word meditate or muse means to “think upon” of “reflect.”

(Opposite of amuse—no thinking)

It also means “to murmur, to mutter, to make sound with the mouth...it implies what we express by talking to oneself.”

One way is to say the verse, or each word, or phrase and emphasize each and think on each word

For **God** so loved...

For God **so loved** the world...

For God so loved **the world** that He gave...

(John 3:16 and Gordie ex.—“That’s what I want you to say at my funeral.”)

### **Other guidelines for meditating (using Psalm 1)**

[Note: Always approach a scripture within its context]

Look at the overall structure

(Three things to avoid, one thing to do)

(Outcomes of each)

Look for contrasts, similarities, analogies, progressions

(Wicked/righteous)

(Perish/blessing)

(Walks—stands—sits)

Look for cause and effect statement

(Meditates/delights—blessing)

Ask who, what, when, where, why, how questions

Ask—Does this text reveal something I should do?

Check cross references

(Jeremiah 17: 5-8)

Look at the root meanings of the words

Sheep eat down to the root

Go over sheet on root meanings

**Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked,**

Blessed (835)—How happy!

Walks (1980)—To inspect, to go see, to select

Counsel (6098)—Advice

Ungodly [wicked] (7563)—Morally wrong

**Nor stands in the way of sinners,**

Way (1870)—A road (as trodden), fig.---A course of life or mode of action

Sinners (2400)—A criminal, or one accounted guilty, offender

**Nor sits in the seat of scoffers;**

Sits (3427)—To sit down, by impl. To dwell, to remain, causat. To settle, to marry

Seat (4186)—seat, site, session, abode

Scoffers [scornful] (3887)—To make mouths at, to scoff, to have in derision, to mock, to scorn

**But his delight is in the law of the Lord,**

Delight (2656)—Pleasure, desire, thing of value

**And on His law he meditates day and night.**

**He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season**

Tree (6086)—A tree (from its firmness) [root—to fasten (or make firm)]

Planted (8362)—Transplanted

Streams [rivers] (6388)—A small channel of water as in irrigation

**And its leaf does not wither. In all that he does, he prospers.**

Wither (5034)—To wilt, to fall away, fail, faint, fig.—to be foolish or morally wicked

Prosper (6743)—To push forward, break out, be profitable

**The wicked [ungodly] are not so,**

Not so the ungodly, they are not so! (Septuagint)

**But are like chaff that the wind drives away.**

**Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment,**

**Nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous;**

**For the Lord knows the way of the righteous,**

**But the way of the wicked will perish.**

Righteous (6662)—Just, lawful [root—to be right in the moral or forensic sense]

Perish (6)—To wander away, i.e. lose oneself, by impl. perish—be undone, have no way to flee

## **What to meditate on**

The Word of God

The character of God

Truths of Christianity—Westminster Confession of Faith, Lg & Sm Catechism (Q. #1 ex.)

Providential experiences—His gracious provisions and mercies in our life

Creation—Psalm 19:1, Romans 1:20

Sermons

“It is better to hear one Sermon only and meditate on that, then to hear two sermons and meditate on neither.” —Thomas White

## **Practical tips for meditation**

Try to find a place that is quiet and relatively free of distractions

Try to use the same place each time

(Suzanna Wesley—17 children—put her apron over head to get alone with God)

Pick a time when you will be alert and energetic and not stressed by other obligations.

(Schedule yourself an appointment for meditation if your schedule is tight)

To be consistent try to use the same time everyday—aim is developing a habit

Not long intervals in between—better a little frequently than a long time intermittently

Have in mind what you are going to meditate on before you get there—“Cuds”

(Hand copying the verse(s) will help you see things you may not see otherwise)

Seek the Holy Spirit’s assistance

Look for personal applications then turn those personal applications into personal resolutions

Allow for prayer, thanksgiving and worship—it is relational time with our bridegroom

(The Word feeds meditation and meditation feeds prayer)

Persevere; don’t surrender to Satan by abandoning your task—maintain a warfare mentality

Utilize the Lord’s Day

“Had you ever tasted of the sweetness of this duty of Divine Meditation, you would find little time for vain talk, and idle discourses, especially upon the Lord’s Day.”

—Thomas Gouge

Puritans saw the Lord’s Day as the “market day of the soul.”

(Spiritual food for the upcoming six days)

[Pass out copies of Matthew Henry’s commentary on Psalm 1]

## **Suggested meditation in preparation for next week**

Colossians 2:8

