

D22



Monthly Practice 2: Meditating on the Word

God's word is transformative to our inner being. I love to read, but unlike any other book, God uses Scripture to speak directly to our hearts in a unique way. **Hebrews 4:12** "For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart." But in order to make space for this to happen most effectively, it involves doing something that's hard for most of us: **Slowing down!**

Q: Why is this so hard? We live in a "sound-byte" world. Social media is all about short statements, often without any context. Younger generations are struggling to read and focus (online articles often now indicate how long it will take you to read it). People in general read less than 12 minutes per day.

Writers like David speak of "dwelling" and "meditating" on God's word, in order that it might find a place in his "heart" (inner self). **Psalms 119:10-11, 15-16** "With my whole heart I seek you; let me not wander from your commandments! I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you [...] I will **meditate** on your precepts and fix my eyes on your ways. I will delight in your statutes; I will not forget your word."

David was referring to the Law. However, since Jesus has fulfilled the law, we might meditate in a similar way on *His* "words and ways," as well as those other NT authors who have fleshed out the gospel. **Q: How do we slow down long enough to do this?**

- 1. Find a quiet place** – When Jesus taught his disciples to pray, he said, "When you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father who sees what is done in secret, will reward you." (Matt 6:6) This applies to reading the Word as well. When we seek out a place without distraction, and present ourselves to God, he promises to meet with us.
- 2. Believe** – When we find that quiet place with Bible in hand, we need to believe that something always happens. The Word is living and active. Ask God to speak to you today through the reading of His Word. "Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening." (1 Sam 3:9)
- 3. Read** – How we read matters. We are trained in school to read for information, but we need to learn to read for transformation. Read the Scripture slowly with a listening heart. Listen for a word or phrase that stands out to you. Ask: Where does my attention rest? Pause and read the passage for a second time.

4. **Meditate** – Spend time with the Lord meditating on His Word. Ask God why your attention rested where it did. Ask God what he want to say to you? Then listen.
5. **Pray** – Our meditation naturally spills over into prayer. Continue to pray for as long as God holds you there. Thank him for his intimate presence and his words to you.
6. **Journal** – Write out a scripture that God has used to speak to you. Record your reflections. Take the words God has given you and contemplate on them. Spend time with them throughout your day. **Q: How can you practice what the Spirit is teaching you?**
7. **Practice** – **Q: What can you put into practice today?** The deep work of the Spirit brings transformation, and you can then live from that place. You are becoming more like Jesus because your living is being shaped by the Spirit.

As a D-22 Group, we encourage you to put these steps into practice this month and share with each other what God is showing you in His Word.

As always, if you have questions or stories to share, we'd love to hear from you! You can email **Mike** (mike@canvaschurch.ca) or **Rob** (filgates@hotmail.com) to get in touch.