

“The Benefits of Meditating upon God’s Word”  
Psalm 119:97-104  
(Preached at Trinity, February 3, 2013)

I’m supplying these notes for the benefit of busy pastors who may be engaged in bi-vocational work, feeling the pressure of preparing to preach twice on the Lord’s Day while trying to balance full-time secular work as well as caring for their families. While the notes of another man are no substitute for personal study, I pray that these may aid in the process of preparing to preach.

**Disclaimer:** These are the actual notes I bring with me to the pulpit, which I follow loosely. They are not designed for publication. While I try to make every effort to give proper credit to my sources from the pulpit, adequate citations will sometimes be absent from my notes. If anyone feels their intellectual material has been used without adequate citation, please contact me and I’ll make immediate correction giving credit.

1. Tonight we’ll look at the thirteenth stanza of Psalm 119. It is designated by the Hebrew letter **מ** – Mem.  
**Verse 97** sets the theme of the stanza. The psalmist describes the fruit of his meditation.  
**Psalm 119:97 KJV** - "O how love I thy law! it *is* my meditation all the day."  
Also **Verse 99**  
**Psalm 119:99 KJV** - "I have more understanding than all my teachers: for thy testimonies *are* my meditation."
2. David’s life was one of meditating upon God’s Word. It was always upon his mind. He pondered its truths, considered its loveliness, and savored the fellowship with God through His Word.
3. This word for meditation is only found three times in the Bible. **Verses 97 & 99** and once in the Book of Job.
  - A. It refers to an occupation of the mind, the preoccupation of thought.
  - B. It is meditation in its purest sense—to have the mind given over to careful consideration
  - C. There are other words translated meditate or meditation. By far, most are found in the Psalms. One of the best known Psalm of meditation is **Psalm 1**  
**Psalm 1:2 KJV** - "But his delight *is* in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night."
4. Meditation means different things to different people.
  - A. In non-Christian systems including yoga and transcendental meditation it involves the emptying of the mind.
  - B. With Christian meditation it involves filling the mind.  
**Philippians 4:8 KJV** - "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things *are* honest, whatsoever things *are* just, whatsoever things *are* pure, whatsoever things *are* lovely, whatsoever things *are* of good report; if *there be* any virtue, and if *there be* any praise, think on these things."
5. Of course, the highest Christian meditation is meditating upon the Word of God. This describes the process of filling the mind, thinking deeply, and considering the Word of God carefully and reflecting upon it.  
It is immersing ourselves fully in God’s Word.
6. In addition, as we consider meditation upon the Word of God it brings with it the element of fellowship with God. Our relationship with God is tied inseparably to His Word. As we meditate upon God’s Word our minds are able to consider the infinite nature of God.
7. Meditation begins with a careful reading of the Word of God but it demands a careful consideration of each passage.

- A. We consider the excellence of God's Word. We ponder the nature of Divine inspiration—this is the Word of God. God is speaking.  
What is God saying in the passage? What does it reveal about God? What is the impact upon my life?  
**2 Timothy 3:16-17 KJV** - "All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: <sup>17</sup> That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works."
- B. Memorization takes meditation to a higher level. And if we, like David, are going to meditate upon the Word of God continually it demands that we memorize portions of it. Then we will be able to reflect upon whole passages throughout the day.  
Donald Whitney – "One of the most underrated benefits of memorizing Scripture is that it provides fuel for meditation. When you have memorized a verse of Scripture, you can meditate on it anywhere at anytime during the day or night. Whether you are driving the car, riding the train, waiting at the airport, standing in line, rocking a baby, or eating a meal, you can benefit from the Spiritual Discipline of meditation if you have made the deposits of memorization."
8. In this passage David has discovered the excellence of God's Word. It has captured his affections. He continually mulled over and contemplated the Word of God throughout the day.  
**Psalm 119:97 KJV** - "O how love I thy law! it *is* my meditation all the day."
9. He had discovered the infinite value of God's Word and the great benefit of keeping his mind filled with its truths.
10. Tonight I want to allow this stanza to direct our minds upon the benefits of meditating upon God's Word.
- I. Meditating upon God's Word will fill your mind with spiritual discernment
  - II. Meditating upon God's Word will provide a great defense against sin
  - III. Mediating upon God's Word will kindle your affections more and more towards it
- I. Meditating upon God's Word will fill your mind with spiritual discernment
- A. Wisdom & discernment are the great graces of this stanza  
**Psalm 119:98 KJV** - "Thou through thy commandments hast made me wiser than mine enemies"  
**Psalm 119:99 KJV** - "I have more understanding than all my teachers"  
**Psalm 119:100 KJV** - "I understand more than the ancients"  
**Psalm 119:104 KJV** - " Through thy precepts I get understanding"
1. David's testimony was that his consistent diet of God's Word and continual meditation upon it gave him incredible wisdom
  2. He was wiser than his enemies. Their schemes were continually frustrated because of David's wisdom. The greatest example of this was Jesus. His enemies continually sought to discredit Him but they were always brought to shame through His infinite wisdom.
  3. David had more understanding than his earthly teachers. Although worldly knowledge is important and we never diminish the need for a thorough education it cannot compare with spiritual discernment.  
A worldly-wise man is a fool if he doesn't possess spiritual discernment.

**1 Corinthians 1:20 KJV** - "Where *is* the wise? where *is* the scribe? where *is* the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?"

**Proverbs 1:7 KJV** - "The fear of the LORD *is* the beginning of knowledge: *but* fools despise wisdom and instruction."

**Proverbs 15:2 KJV** - "The tongue of the wise useth knowledge aright: but the mouth of fools poureth out foolishness."

4. David declared that he had greater understanding than those much older than himself.

Godly wisdom transcends age and worldly knowledge.

B. Paul spoke of this great discernment in **Romans 12**

**Romans 12:2 KJV** - "And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what *is* that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."

1. The word for transformed is μεταμορφώω – it is a present passive imperative.
  - It is present which means it carries durative action – it depicts an action that is continuing
  - It is passive which tells us the transformation is outside ourselves. Paul is not saying “Transform yourselves”
  - It is imperative which tells us our responsibility is not removed. We must allow the Holy Spirit to do His perfect work giving ourselves fully to the means of grace
2. In other words we are to be transformed and continually transformed. But how is this to take place? How can our minds be transformed and renewed?

C. The chief means of this renewing is the Word of God.

1. The Bible transforms our minds  
NAS **Colossians 3:16** – “Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom . . .”  
**Psalm 19:7 KJV** - "The law of the LORD *is* perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD *is* sure, making wise the simple."  
KJV **Psalm 119:99** – “I have more understanding than all my teachers: for thy testimonies *are* my meditation.”
2. Our minds are renewed as we daily read, study, and meditate upon the Word of God.

II. Meditating upon God’s Word will provide a great defense against sin

**Verses 101-102; 104**

- A. The Word of God provides the chief source of instruction on holiness  
**2 Timothy 3:16-17 KJV** - "All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: <sup>17</sup> That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works."
1. The Bible continually informs our minds  
 David declares that he was taught by God  
**Psalm 119:102 KJV** - "I have not departed from thy judgments: for thou hast taught me."

2. When our minds are saturated with the Word of God it will be an ever source of wisdom at every turn of our lives. Every decision will be directed by its truth. It will keep us from decisions of carnal foolishness and sin.
  3. The most simple truth is this: Unless you know and understand the Word of God you will not be able to obey it. But to set your heart to it and meditate upon it continually has the greatest reward. With the Word of God in your mind continually your life will be conformed to it more consistently.
- B. The Word of God is our greatest weapon against every temptation of Satan  
**Ephesians 6:17 KJV** - "And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:"
1. Satan continually lies and deceives and seeks to pervert your life and lead you to sin. He wants to destroy your children, your marriage, this church.
  2. How can you wield this powerful sword unless it is stored securely in your mind?
- C. Those who spend the greatest time in meditation will thrive the greatest spiritually and have their lives more conformed to the ways of God  
**Psalm 1:2-3 KJV** - "But his delight *is* in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. <sup>3</sup> And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper."
1. This is the measure of true success in God's Kingdom  
**Joshua 1:8** – "This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success."  
    - a. Biblical success is doing God's will God's way. True happiness comes through obedience to God's will. God's will can only be known through His Word.
    - b. This is only possible as we continually keep God's Word upon our mind. Psalm 119 isn't teaching that the Word of God is the best way to keep our life pure from sin. It is teaching that the Word of God is the only way!  
**Psalm 119:11** – "Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee."  
**Psalm 119:9 KJV** - "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed *thereto* according to thy word."
  2. The person whose mind is filled with the Word of God will find his words to be pure and edifying unto both himself and others. What you speak reflects what is in your heart.  
**Matthew 12:34 KJV** - "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh."
  3. The person whose mind is filled with the Words of Christ will have his heart filled with the will of Christ.  
**John 15:7 KJV** - "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you."

- III. Mediating upon God's Word will kindle your affections more and more towards it  
**Psalm 119:103 KJV** - "How sweet are thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth!"
- A. David continually meditated upon the Word of God because it was the object of his delight
1. He declared it to be sweeter than honey. This describes something that brought great pleasure and enjoyment
  2. How is this possible? It is the fruit of our conversion. A hunger for the Word of God is an indication of the new birth. We have a new appetite.  
**Jeremiah 31:33 KJV** - "But this *shall be* the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people."
  3. In other words God has given His people a love for His Word
  4. But this love has to be cultivated and nurtured. Neglect can cause the fires of our affection to cool.  
**Thomas Watson** – "The reason we come away so cold from reading the Word is, because we do not warm ourselves at the fire of meditation."
- B. There is a wonderful truth. The more we fill our minds with the Word of God the more we delight in it.  
 Spurgeon: "This was both the effect of his love and the cause of it. He meditated in God's word because he loved it, and then loved it the more because he meditated in it."
1. The more you delight in the Word of God the more time you will spend savoring it and immersing yourself in it. People always seek first those things they savor.
  2. As you immerse yourself in it you will delight in it more because you will find more of God in it. And it becomes a snowball growing with ever greater intensity.
  3. You will find it sweet and delectable to your taste. You will find your heart turned more and more towards it.  
 And you will find your thoughts continually drawn towards it and occupied with it. This is at the heart of **Verse 97**  
**Psalm 119:97 KJV** - "O how love I thy law! it *is* my meditation all the day."
  4. A young couple in love have their thoughts ever upon one another. We think most about those things we delight in.

### Conclusion:

1. If you knew you had only 30 days remaining on the earth how would you spend them? Would you not treasure each moment because they were of such limited duration? Is this not the reality of our life? It is exceptionally brief. Paul told the Ephesians to “Redeem the time.”
2. To spend our days meditating upon the Word of God will never be determined to have been wasted time. And the fruit of such pursuits is beyond our comprehension.
3. The benefits of memorization and meditation are endless.
  - As we’ve seen here it will help guard your heart against sin.
  - It will enhance your prayer life – your communion with God. God speaks to us through His Word.
  - It will help you to teach other Christians and strengthen their faith – “Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the Word of God.”
  - And it will increase your faith as you hear the Word of God in your head.
  - It will help you evangelize the lost
  - It will help you discern truth from error
4. You will come to love the Word of God more and more.
5. And what better way to obey Paul’s command in Philippians 4  
**Philippians 4:8 KJV** - "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things *are* honest, whatsoever things *are* just, whatsoever things *are* pure, whatsoever things *are* lovely, whatsoever things *are* of good report; if *there be* any virtue, and if *there be* any praise, think on these things."
6. Is it not worth the discipline necessary to make the Bible and ever increasing part of your life? To give yourself more and more to memorizing and meditating upon the Word of God.