

Christian Meditation

Lesson 12-The Usefulness of Meditation

Definition- *“Meditation is the soul’s retiring of itself, that by serious and solemn thinking upon God, the heart may be raised up to heavenly affections.”*

How does biblical meditation profit us? What good is it really? Watson lists 7 (but really 10) ways that meditation is _____ to the saint. He writes, *“I know not any duty that brings in greater income and revenue than this.... O did we know the advantage which comes by this duty we would often retire from the noise and hurry of the world that we might give ourselves to meditation.”*

Meditation helps us:

1. **Profit more from the _____** - *“Reading may bring a truth into the head; meditation brings it into the heart. It is better to meditate on one sermon than to hear five sermons. Many complain that they do not profit from sermons. This may be the chief reason, because they chew not the cud, they do not meditate on what they have heard. If an angel should come from heaven and preach to men, nay, if Jesus Christ Himself were their preacher, they would never profit without meditation.”*

“The bee sucks the flower, and then works it in the hive and makes honey of it. The hearing of a truth preached is the sucking of a flower. There must be a working it in the hive of the heart by meditation, then it turns to honey...Bible knowledge without meditation, makes us no better than devils.”

2. **Have _____ hearts-** *“Some Christians have light hearts...A light Christian will be blown into any opinion or vice; you may blow a feather any way. There are many feathery Christians. The devil no sooner comes with a temptation, but they are ready to take fire...The more serious the heart grows, the more spiritual, and the more spiritual, the more it resembles the Father of spirits. When a man is serious, he is fittest for employment. The serious Christian is fittest for service, and it is meditation which brings the heart into this blessed frame.”*
3. **_____ our affections into _____** - *“Meditation hatches good affections, as the hen hatches her young ones by sitting on them...The reason our affections are so chill and cold in spiritual things is because we do not warm ourselves more at the fire of meditation. Illumination makes us shining lamps; meditation makes us burning lamps...It is the proper work of meditation to excite and blow-up holy affections...When the spouse had by meditation viewed those singular beauties of her beloved, she grew lovesick (Cant. 5:8).”*
4. **Walk in holy _____** - *“The musician first puts his instruments in tune and then he plays a song. Just so, meditation tunes the heart, and then it is fit for any holy service. As the sails to the ship, so is meditation to duty, it carries on the soul more swiftly.”*

“True religion is _____”-Jonathan Edwards

5. **Prepare to _____ the _____** - *“When the ground is softened by meditation, now is a fit time for the seed of the Word to be sown.”*

6. **In our _____ life-** *“Prayer is the spiritual pulse of the soul by which it beats strongly after God. There is no living without prayer. A man cannot live unless he breathes. No more can the soul live unless it breathes out its desires to God...Meditation is a help to prayer. Meditation is like oil to the lamp. The lamp of prayer will soon go out unless meditation feeds it.”*

“A skillful angler observes the time and season when the fish bite best, and then he throws in his hook. Just so, when the heart is warmed by meditation now is the best season to throw in the hook of prayer, and fish for mercy.”

“Meditation has a double benefit in it-it pours in, and pours out. First it pours good thoughts into the mind, and then it pours out those thoughts again into prayer...When Christ was upon the mount, then he prayed. Just so, when the soul is upon the mount of meditation, now it is in tune for prayer. Prayer is the child of meditation. Meditation leads the way, and prayer brings up the rear.”

The goal of biblical meditation is to have our hearts stirred up to heavenly _____. We desire not dead orthodoxy but a lively faith. The goal of both meditation and prayer is the stirring up of our affections (as with all of the means of grace). Going along with what Watson just wrote, Jonathan Edwards gives some helpful insight from his classic work “On Religious Affections”.

“To instance in the duty of prayer: it is manifest, we are not appointed, in this duty, to declare God’s perfections, His majesty, holiness, goodness, and all-sufficiency; our own meanness, emptiness, dependence, and unworthiness, our wants and desires, in order to inform God of these things nor to incline His heart, and prevail with Him to be willing to show us mercy; but rather suitably to affect our own hearts with the things we express, and so to prepare us to receive the blessings we ask.”

7. **Grow in _____** - *“When David had been contemplating the works of creation, their splendor, harmony, motion, influence-the plumes of pride fall off-and he begins to have self-abasing thoughts: ‘When I look at the heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place, what is man that you are mindful of Him, and the son of man that you care for him?’ (Ps. 8:3-4).”*

Watson’s Bonus 3

1. **Meditation is a strong _____ against _____** - *“Most sin is committed for lack of meditation. Men often sin through ignorance. Would they be so brutishly sensual as they are if they did seriously meditate upon what sin is? Would they take this viper in their hand, if they did but consider its sting?”*
2. **Meditation is a cure for _____** - *“The covetous man is an idolater (Col. 3:5). Though he will not bow to an idol, yet he worships engraved images in his coins. Now meditation is an excellent means to lessen our esteem of the world. Great things seem little to him who stands high. If he could live among the stars, the earth would seem as nothing...He who is catching a crown, will not fish for minnows.”*
3. **Meditation banishes vain and sinful _____** - *“The mind is the shop where sin is first framed. Sin begins at the thoughts. The thoughts are the first plotters and contrivers of evil. The mind and imagination are the stage where sin is first acted.”*