



MEDITATION

WHAT IS IT?

Concentration. Focus. Beholding. Could these words be the key to living victoriously in an age of chaos and uncertainty? Increasingly, I am learning the answer is “Yes.”

WHY DO IT?

“The most important rule is for us to concentrate on keeping our lives open to God ... the busyness of things obscures our concentration on God. We must maintain a position of beholding Him. Never let a hurried lifestyle disturb the relationship of abiding in Him” [Oswald Chambers]

RELATED SCRIPTURE

“You will keep in perfect peace those whose minds are steadfast, because they trust in you.” [Isaiah 26:3]

“I keep my eyes always on the Lord. With him at my right hand, I will not be shaken.” [Psalm 16:8]

A BRIEF OVERVIEW

Where I focus my mind and concentrate my attention greatly affects whether or not I sense the Lord’s presence and therefore whether or not I have His peace and joy. In fact, God’s promise of peace and security are conditioned upon the focus of our minds.

GIVE IT A TRY!

1) Begin with the grand vision of Jesus.

He wants to be one with us in our experience and in our everyday lives, not just in our mental beliefs. Paul called this oneness with Christ the “hope of glory” (Colossians 1:27). So this is not discipline for discipline’s sake but for the sake of enjoying Christ, drawing strength from Him, and living above the circumstances of the world.

2) Start small.

Set aside time every day to intentionally focus on Him. This is different from reading Scripture, but is more akin to meditating (i.e. focusing) on one truth or aspect of God’s character. For 30 seconds, try to keep your mind focused only on this one truth. Sometimes having a word or phrase or verse to repeat in your head is helpful. For example, you could slowly say the word “Abide” or “Trust” or “Rejoice” over and over in your head. This gives time for the truth in your head to affect your heart so that it begins to fill you with the experiential knowledge of God. Keep returning to this word throughout your day.

3) Put boundaries on your availability.

The truth is, we are not indispensable, we are not always needed, and we are not built for 24/7. God wired us for sleep and He commands us to practice stillness to know Him. Take breaks from technology, TV, internet, and even your family and friends. It’s OK ... Jesus did it and so should we.

4) Respond, don't react.

It's easier to act like a Christian than to react like one! So when a challenge comes, you get bad news, someone interrupts you, or "life happens" ... pause and say a very short prayer or repeat your "go to" word, phrase or verse to get your mind on Christ with the goal of seeing this situation through the lens of Christ's love and lordship. Then, react like Jesus is in charge (He is!), like He loves you (He does!), and like He has an unstoppable plan (it's true!).

5) Stay focused and committed!

Our sin nature, Satan, and the world can put thoughts into our heads, but we can choose what we focus on! Remember Peter?? He was walking on water until he took his eyes off of Christ and started focusing on the waves (Matthew 14:21-31). Christians, we were meant to walk with and follow Jesus, so behold Him and move forward in faith!