

TRUTH IN MY SOUL

“Christian meditation engages every part of us — our mind, our emotions, our imagination, our creativity and, supremely, our will.”
— Joyce Huggett

What picture springs into your mind when you hear the word *meditation*?

That first mental image might tell you how thoroughly this practice has been hijacked in your thinking. Sometimes a good thing sets out toward one purpose and somewhere along the line gets redirected to a completely different purpose. Such is the case with meditation. Meditation is a Christian practice meant to draw people into personal contact with our Creator God. But in our present culture, meditation is often used by people for purposes that draw attention away from the God of the Bible.



To recapture the original intent of this practice, we are going to connect it very closely with another spiritual practice — memorization. That way, there can be no doubt that our purpose is to focus on the Word of God — both written and living — for the purpose of encountering the God of the Bible.

Memorization can be hijacked as well if we commit the words of Scripture to memory, and they remain only in our mental storage bank without ever affecting any other part of us. **Christian meditation is inextricably bound with memorization; it is being attentive to God, reflecting and pondering until I encounter the Living Word and the Word fills up every part of me.** May the words and ways of God be so embedded in us that they automatically come into play, just as they did for Jesus.

Our desire is to be saturated with the written Word so that as life unfolds around us, we are living life with God. This can happen when I treasure his thoughts and promises and instructions and let them repeat and echo in my thinking so that they are the central fibers of my mind, memory, imagination, and emotions. Joshua 1:8 invites each of us, and the children we care for, to be that familiar with the Word: **“Study this Book of Instruction continually. Meditate on it day and night so you will be sure to obey everything written in it. Only then will you prosper and succeed in all you do.”**

What a gift we give to our children when we invite them to memorize the Word of the living God and help them use it to engage in biblical meditation. What abundant life they encounter as they weigh every decision, every opportunity against what they have encountered in his Word and experienced in his presence.

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INVITATIONS TO ENGAGE

Start the conversation with your child!

“Come, sit with me a minute. I’d like to show you how to keep the truth from being stuck in your head.”

EARLY CHILDHOOD (2-6 years old)

Even though there are lots of things we don’t know about God, there are some things we know for sure. One of those things is that God is always with us.

To help us remember that, we are going to memorize the promise God gives us in Hebrews 13:5: **“I will never leave you.”** Every time I say a word from that verse, squeeze one of your fingers. Let’s start by squeezing your thumb when I say the first word. *(Continue saying one word and squeezing one finger at a time.)* At the end of the verse we will squeeze our hands together and say, “Promise! Promise!” as we hold on tight. *(Repeat several times.)*

Let’s sit quietly for a minute and think about how good it is to know that promise from God. *(Pause for a quiet minute.)* In a minute I’ll tell you a story about a time when I was really glad I knew that God was with me. **But now, I’d like to hear about some times when you think you might want to hold on tight to that truth?**

ELEMENTARY AGE (5-10 years old)

Joshua 1:8 promises us that thinking about God’s word helps us live life with God in wonderful ways. *(Read the verse with the child.)*

We are going to memorize part of God’s Word today — Hebrews 13:5. *(See the Early Childhood method given above.)* Then, while you keep thinking about that verse, **I’d like for you to draw a picture in your journal of a time when it will be really important to know that about God.**

PRETEEN/EARLY ADOLESCENT (10-14 years old)

Some people misuse the word *meditate* to mean emptying our minds. Christian meditation means the opposite of that; it means filling our minds with God’s thoughts so that every part of life is affected.

Let’s read Joshua 1:8 together. See if you can find a big promise about what happens when we let God’s Word and his way guide our feelings and choices. *(The child reads slowly once and then the parent.)* Let’s meditate on that together.

Let’s sit quietly and ask God to show you some important times you may need or want to know God’s word and his ways. **Let’s find a part of God’s Word that will help you in a hard time.**

RECOMMENDED READING

The Loving Arms of God, by Anne Elizabeth Stickney