

Christian Meditation,
Philippians 4:8-9

Intro:

1. Meditation is not something that is talked about much in Christian Circles.
 - A. It is usually associated with Eastern Religions, Hinduism, Buddhism
 - B. Not aware that bible commands us to meditate.
2. Notice Paul commands us to meditate.
 - A. On things that are good.
 - B. On things we have learned, received, heard and saw in Paul.
3. References to Meditation in Scripture
 - A. Genesis 24:63 mentions Isaac meditating in a field.
 - B. Joshua 1:5-9 God told Joshua to meditate on his law, day and night.
 - C Psalms 1 David says meditating on the law has benefits.
 - D Psalms 119:89-104 Meditating upon Gods commands makes David wise.
 - E Timothy 4:12-16 Meditate on the word, on doctrine, and God's work

Lesson:

1. Couple of things we are looking at today.
 - A. First, What biblical meditation is not.
 1. It is not like the Meditation of Eastern Religions.
 1. Object of meditation is is to experience truth, peace, or being that is inexpressible.
 2. It is not like the Christian Mystics, Quakers, Catholics, Protestants.
 - a. These meditate in order to experience God or receive a revelation from God.
 3. Both of these religious forms of meditation usually attempt to empty the mind to find inner truth, subjective truth that comes from self revelation.
 - B. What biblical meditation is.
 - A, To dwell or contemplate on on some truth or reality that already has been revealed. Objective meditation, revelation of truth outside of ones self.
 - B. Examples of things to meditate on.
 1. The Lord himself. Psalm 63:1-7
 2. The Works of God Psalms 77:10-15
 3. God's revealed Word.
 - a. Psalm 119:15-16.
 - b. Psalm 119:23-24
 - c. Psalm 119: 47-48
 - d. Psalm 119: 146-149
 4. In the words of Paul in Philippians, meditate on things.
 - a. Things that are True, noble, just, pure, lovely, of good report, things that are of virtue and praiseworthy.

5. Purpose of Biblical Meditation.
 - a. Nourishes us with understanding of God and his revealed word. Not some unknown truth, but God's revealed truth.
 - b. Gives us spiritual Joy and strength through that nourishment.
 - c. Keeps our hearts and minds focused upon Christ.

So we see a stark difference between biblical meditation and that of other religions. Christian meditation dwells on things that are already revealed in creation or by what God has revealed in his word. Whereas other meditations are seeking hidden truths, and to find new things to be revealed within ones self.

Why we should Meditate:

1. Meditation is a source of Joy and Strength.
 - A. As we have already seen in our passages in Psalms, or in Isaiah 40:27-31
 1. Meditating on God's provision brings us joy.
 2. Meditating on God's word gives us strength as we face trials, and await his provision and deliverance.
2. Meditation is an important part in transformation.
 - A. The Christians focus and Goal is to become more Christlike. Romans 8:29
“For whom he foreknew, he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.
 - B. To become more Christlike we must be transformed in his image.
Romans 12:1-2 “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God That you present your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.
 1. Biblical Meditation results in the renewing of our minds which is what is needed to be transformed and to become more Christlike in our thinking.

How to Meditate:

1. A Study done by researchers at Stanford University shows that what we watch, and influences around have an effect on our imaginations, our learning patterns and our behaviors.
 - A. That is why it is so important on what we meditate on.
 1. Notice Paul in Philippians 4:9. says that which we have received, heard, and saw in him, is what we should do. Having positive Godly examples to follow as opposed to worldly example.
 - a. Imitate Paul, as he imitates Christ, and the God of peace will be with you.

2. Actively read and study scripture.
 - A. Think upon, and meditate upon your daily reading.
 1. Doing so helps in keeping our hearts and minds focused on things above, and not on things of the earth.
3. Be in Prayer
 - A. Communing with God in prayer also focuses our hearts and minds on him, meditating upon his word, upon his work, and upon worship of the father.
 1. The practice of regular scripture reading, and prayer will have the effect of renewing ones mind, and transforming their thoughts to be more like Christ.

Conclusion:

What we see here is nothing new that we have not seen before. These 2 verses here in Philippians stand as instruction as to what we should be focusing on in our lives. In context of what is happening here, Paul is instructing his readers to focus on these things that are true, noble, just, pure, lovely, of good report, virtuous, and praiseworthy not only in our own hearts and minds as we meditate upon God and his word, but also to focus on such things toward each other.