

Rhythms of Scripture: MEDITATE

This semester, we've been looking at how we engage with Scripture and community. First, we looked at incorporating a rhythm of Scripture reading daily. Some of us have been doing that our whole lives, and some of us, not so much. Either way, we want to read scripture daily together. The psalms have been a sort of starting place for us.

It's not too difficult to replace one of our daily habits with reading or listening to a psalm. And for those of us who are like me and need a little nudge to make a habit stick, Nichole and I have been reading a psalm a day together with you, and we've been sending that out via text every morning at 7AM.

If you haven't been receiving that and would like to, you can text the word Psalms to me at 417 282 8338. It's wonderful to read along with you and know that as we're reading and meditating, our community is too.

Also, we've been reading large sections of scripture out loud together in these groups. Scripture's emphasis on reading together is very clear. And what a privilege it is to have each other to read and listen with. To have the voice of the Spirit speak through each of us in these conversations. Reading out loud together is an incredible way to engage with the Bible.

Last week, we started a rhythm of sharing together with Sharon Ellard's Psalm Story. It's my prayer that others of you would be willing to tell your story via video to encourage others. Please let me know if the Spirit is leading you to share your story.

In our next session, we're going to rewind to last semester as we talk through the rhythm of praying scripture. We're going to be having an hour of prayer together.

We have a video that we created and used last semester to guide us and give us some songs to sing and some scriptures to pray. You can view any resource for small groups at praise.fyi. Go up to connect, small groups, and then go to the videos and resources. I would encourage you to prepare for your group hour of prayer by downloading that guide and praying through it yourself this coming week.

This week, we're looking at the practice of meditating on Scripture. As we were preparing for this week, I realized we've already talked about this. We've already done a video on meditating on Scripture. So, we're going to use the time machine of the internet to rewind four years ago to a much less gray version of me as we look at meditating on God's Word.

What if I told you there are two simple keys to unlock a life of joy? Two practices that can transform your life from one blown around in the winds of circumstances to a life that is full of joy, fruitful, durable, and prospering. I want to talk to you about one of those keys today, meditating.

Let me show you the kind of meditating I'm talking about. In the Bible, there's this collection of ancient song lyrics called the Book of Psalms, and it starts out like this.

Psalm 1 (NLT)

Oh, the joys of those who do not
follow the advice of the wicked,
or stand around with sinners,
or join in with mockers.

But they delight in the law of the Lord,
meditating on it day and night.

They are like trees planted along the riverbank,
bearing fruit each season.

Their leaves never wither,
and they prosper in all they do.

These are the two keys I'm talking about. Delighting in God's word, which we'll have to save for another video, and meditating on God's word.

I don't know about you, But I have this constant voice in my head, this long running, ongoing, incoherent conversation I have right up in my old noggin. *Incoherent echoed voices*

Please tell me I'm not the only one with all this chatter in my head. Most of the time it's harmless, even if it is maybe a little distracting. Yogis have recognized the problem of our internal chatter for thousands of years. And their solution?

Physical practices to help us silence that chatter at our will. Just breathe, and empty your mind. The problem is, if you ask any psychologist, they'll tell you we can probably never really turn off all that chatter. For better or worse, it's just part of being human. Even the most enlightened yogi will admit the best you can do is learn to be fully aware of the chatter and separate yourself from it, just to quiet it a little.

But the kind of meditation the psalmist is talking about here takes a different approach. That word we have translated as meditate here in our Bible is the same word that's often translated speak or mutter. So the psalmist is saying, get that voice in your head, reciting scripture all day from morning to night, recite it to yourself, have a conversation with yourself about it.

Forget trying to silence the voice in your head. Use it for good. This is at least partly where that joy comes from. When your voice starts to tell you you're not good enough. You'll never be good enough. You can answer, you're right, but His grace is sufficient. His power is made perfect in

weakness. When you're unhappy with the way you look in the mirror, your voice can remind you, I am fearfully and wonderfully made. How marvelous are your works, oh Lord.

When you're driving home from work, the voice in your head can ponder, what does it really mean "Blessed are the peacemakers." When you've lost someone you love, In the midst of your grief the voice in your head can say, "Blessed are those who mourn". And "we do not grieve like those with no hope."

When that heavy decision is weighing on you, your inner dialogue is reminding you, Trust in the Lord with all your heart. Do not lean on your own understanding. When your work is all dried up and your career is over, the voice in your head can remind you, I know how to live on almost nothing or with everything.

I've learned the secret of living, for I can do everything through Christ who gives me strength. What a revolutionary way to live. You can start today. It begins by simply reading the Bible. It's an amazing book full of amazing stories that God uses to show us who we are and who He is and that we are part of His plan.

But don't just read because you're supposed to; to check off a box on your to do list. Read it, and think about it for a while. Remember what you read. From morning to night, give that voice in your head something good to talk about for once. If you don't know where to start, read along with us. Follow the link in the description below to see what part of the Bible we're reading together.

After you've read it, meditate on it. I'm sure it will change your life for the better. I'm Pastor Dylan. Don't miss out on any of our videos. Listen to that voice in your head saying, You should like and subscribe. Some real solid advice. We'll see you next time.