



Weekly Newsletter: 13th August 2024

Reflection: Top 10 Reasons to Meditate on Gospel Truth

By Joe Barnard

One of the less commonly practiced disciplines of the Christian life is meditating on gospel truth. For many, the mere mention of the word “meditation” is off-putting. A lot of evangelicals think of meditation as an Eastern practice, a kind of Trojan horse sneaking new age religion into the lives of Christians. While not every form of meditation is the same, believers need to be aware that there is a distinctive form of Christian meditation, which is not just a discipline for spiritual growth, but one of the most potent exercises that can be performed. Thomas Brooks, one of Spurgeon’s favourite spiritual writers, says, “It is not he who reads most – but he who meditates most, who will prove the choicest, sweetest, wisest and strongest Christian.” A thousand similar quotes could be offered from wonderful Christians ranging from early church fathers, to medieval saints, to the Reformers, all the way to more recent faith heroes like Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Dawson Trotman. All such voices unite in saying the same thing: meditating on truth is vital for spiritual growth. To fail to meditate on truth is as detrimental to the soul as failing to eat or sleep is to the body.

But, why exactly should we meditate? Here are my top 10 reasons to set time aside to meditate on gospel truth.

1 – It’s Possible to Day-Dream about Jesus

What a wonderful thought - that instead of having to strive to turn your mind to Jesus, he could pop into your thinking unintentionally. This can actually happen. The things we purposefully store into our hearts have a way of revisiting the mind unexpectedly. The more often and deeply we meditate on the beauty of Christ the more likely such beauty will steal into our thoughts - even while day-dreaming.

2 – Life and Peace Grow with Meditation

In Romans 8:6 Paul says, “To set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace.” Do you want more spiritual vitality? Do you want more psychological peace? If so, act on Paul’s teaching.

3 – Meditation Deepens Certainty of Faith

Doubts are the scourge of faith in the modern world. Is there something we can do to reduce or even eliminate the number of doubts that cloud faith?

According to the great Puritan theologian, John Owen, the answer is “yes”. Owen is careful to distinguish between the imagination and faith. The imagination produces non-existing things. Faith interacts with things that are true, though unseen. Owen says, “Where things are real and substantial, the more they are

inquired into, the more they evidence their being and substance.” His point is that the unseen objects of faith reveal themselves *as true* the more diligent we are to understand and contemplate them. Do you want a more certain faith? Spend more time meditating on spiritual truths.

4 – Meditation Prunes and Orders the Heart

Proverbs 26 says, “I passed by the field of a sluggard, by the vineyard of a man lacking sense, and behold, it was all overgrown with thorns; the ground was covered with nettles, and its stone wall was broken down.” This is a pretty accurate picture of the typical mind of a person in the modern world – untidy and overgrown. How do we cut back on distraction and weed unwanted passions? Meditation is a critical means of soul-gardening.

5 – Meditation Stabilizes the Heart to Endure Affliction

Psalms 1 tells us there are two types of people: leaves and trees. How do you become a tree? The answer is simple: meditate on the Word of God.

6 – Meditation Is the Bellows of Affections

Books on wealth creation advise entrepreneurs to meditate on money. Books on sports psychology tell athletes to meditate on success in competitions. Why is such advice so common? One of the basic principles of human psychology is that vision equals passion. The more we meditate on an object of love, the more love we will have for an object of meditation.

To meditate on anything is like rubbing cold hands on a frosty morning. Do you want to love Jesus more passionately? Meditate on him more frequently.

7 – Meditation Is Oil for the Lamp of Prayer

Elijah and Elisha both performed miracles involving flasks of oil. Through both of their ministries, bottles that should have run dry instead kept flowing from hidden fullness.

Does your heart feel dry and empty when you try to pray? Do you quickly run out of things to say? Interperse meditation and prayer. When we meditate, we refill the vessel of the heart so that, turning back to prayer, our heart is filled- not just with words- but affection.

8 – Meditation Is the Cure of Sinful Passions

Sin is attractive because it has a superficial beauty and counterfeit goodness. How do you take the shine off of sin? The answer is by meditating on what is truly beautiful and authentically good. Jesus says, “If the eye is good, the whole body will be full of light.” Meditation is how we purify the eye of the heart.

9 – Meditation Fastens Truth to the Mind

Thomas Watson, another great Puritan, says, “Without meditation, the truths of God will not stay with us. The heart is hard, and the memory slippery—and without meditation all is lost! Meditation imprints and fastens a truth in the mind. Serious meditation is like the engraving of letters in gold or marble which endures.”

10 – Sometimes Meditation Results in Special Communion with Jesus

Bernard of Clairvaux, in his great commentary on Song of Songs, says, “O saint, know you not that your husband Christ is bashful, and will not be affectionate in company, retire yourself by meditation into the closet, or the field, and there you shall have Christ's embraces.” What further incentive do we need to take

time for meditation? Do you love Christ? Meditate on him and you just might find yourself caught up in his arms.

Neil Longwe's Ordination

Neil's ordination will take place **this Saturday (17th August) at 2pm** at Christ Church Glasgow, Anniesland Hall, 796 Crow Road, Glasgow G13 1LX. All of the HEC family are warmly invited.

Parking isn't great but there's on street parking in the residential streets nearby or there's a Morrisons supermarket that has three hours of free parking.

Home Groups

We will be reorganising our home groups this Autumn. This is an exciting opportunity to build new friendships in the congregation. If anyone would like to join a home group (who has not been a part of one in the past), please contact Joe or Liz (Liz@holyroodevangelical.org). Home groups are a great way to feel more a part of the shared life of HEC.

The plan is for new groups to launch at the start of October. Until then, we will keep to the weekly rhythm of prayer meetings each Wednesday evening.

Act Like Men – Tuesday 20th August

Join Hope Church Bingham (Mountcastle Drive South) for an evening men's conference to encourage each other to live for King Jesus in Edinburgh and beyond. Act Like Men event will take place on **Tuesday 20th August from 7-8.30pm**.

Ian Hamilton is the main speaker on Walking With God, Sol Fenne is leading the praise and there will be a bookstall from the Faith Mission. If you're a man in Edinburgh, this event is not to be missed. Tickets are free and to reserve one, go [here](#).



Community Picnic – Save the date!



Men's Curry Night – Saturday 31st August



All the men in the church family are warmly invited to the Manse (112 Milton Road West) on Saturday 31st August at 6pm for a curry night

Please sign up [here](#) so that we have an idea of numbers and any dietary requirements. Thanks!

October Holiday Club at HEC

We have been praying for more local outreach for children and families. God is answering our prayers. HEC will be partnering with Word of Life and a church in the USA to put on a holiday club over the October school holidays. Word of Life will be taking the lead in terms of organising the event and the USA team (in partnership with the Mission Team). HEC will be providing our building to host the holiday club and a team of volunteers to support the events. The hope of the Mission Team is that this event might be a catalyst for us to be able to reach more children and families in the community. Please pray for Gillian and Joe and they take part in planning discussions. Also prayerfully consider if you would like to volunteer to help with the holiday club.

Date: Monday 14th to Friday 18th October
Time: 9am to 12.30pm



Scottish Women's Bible Convention – Saturday 5th October

The Scottish Women's Bible Convention is back! This year Caroline West will be teaching on the topic of rest from Matthew 11. Come along to Charlotte Chapel on Saturday 5th October from 10am to 3pm. Bring your own lunch!

The aim of the day is to provide faithful Bible teaching by women for women with the Lord Jesus as our focus. For tickets go [here](#) and speak to Liz for more details.



Assisted Suicide Bill – The Call for Evidence

The [call for evidence](#) launched by the Scottish Parliament's Health Committee in June, as part of its scrutiny of Liam McArthur's assisted suicide bill, **closes this Friday (16th August)**. Individuals and organisations are invited to express their views; Care Not Killing are encouraging us all to respond. **The Committee has**

published both a [short survey](#) and a [detailed call for evidence](#). The [short survey](#) requires answers to only four questions. The [detailed call for evidence](#) comprises eight substantive questions and considers the proposed legislation from all perspectives. Care Not Killing have produced a [guide](#) to responding to the detailed call for evidence.

Cross Training Men's Conferences



Joe and Cross Training Ministries are organising two men's conferences in Scotland this year. Join them for a weekend full of training, friendship and fun! There are two options-

- 4th – 6th October at Gowanbank
- 11th – 13th October at Alltnacriche

Speak to Joe for more details or go [here](#).

Summer Appeal 2024



This is the final week! Thank you to everyone for their generosity. Our summer appeal goes towards the support of our three overseas missionaries – the Sorsamo family in Finland, Lorna in Japan and James in Singapore. The church bank details can be found [here](#) and please use the reference 'Summer Appeal'. Cheques (made payable to Holyrood Evangelical Church) and cash in an envelope marked 'Summer Appeal'

can also be placed in the offering box or given to Nick Archer.

Church Calendar

For your info and prayers:

- Tuesday: Mission Team Meeting at 7.30pm in the church
- Wednesday: Prayer meeting in person at 7pm (and on Zoom)
- Thursday: Session Meeting at 7pm (in person)
- Sunday: Services at 10.30am and 6pm - Joe Barnard preaching (live streamed)
- Monday:
 - Baby and Toddlers at 10am
 - Youth Discipleship Team Meeting at 7pm (on Zoom)



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