

# Meditate on Scripture

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To meditate on a passage is to think about it or reflect on it.

This text gives some illustrations of how this can be done, and with it some tools that you might want to use.

It is good to start this process in prayer. Prayer does something for us, and something for God. It acts on us in helping us to realise that we are not just going through some technique but seeking to engage with God. It acts on our relationship with God in that it gives Him permission to work in our lives, and show us things that have not been understood and hence influence the way we live.

## Word Emphasis Technique

The text we will use is Joshua 1:8 (A word of explanation – depart from your life is the equivalent to our ‘in one ear and out the other’.)

⚠ Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful.

For this technique, read the verse many times. Each time emphasising a different word or set of words, then ponder the new meaning that is thrown up by this emphasis. The words chosen in the examples below were not carefully thought through, but random selections. The randomness allows the text to take me by surprise.

⚠ Do not **let** this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; **meditate** on it day and night, so that you may be **careful** to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful.

Emphasising these three words emphasises to me a care in approaching God’s word.

⚠ Do not let **this** Book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on **it** day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in **it**. Then you will be prosperous and successful.

Emphasising these words emphasises that I have a choice of which books to meditate and spend time on. The Lord is concerned that I choose His book.

⚠ Do not let this Book of the Law **depart** from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to **do** everything written in it. Then you will **be** prosperous and successful.

Emphasising these words emphasises what I do, and what God will make of me, if I do it.

## Entering the Story Technique

A technique that is very helpful for texts where there is more narrative than teaching is to imagine that you are there in the text, not so much as an observer but as one of the key participants.

In this technique you need to ask yourself questions:

- How you feel about what is going on?
- Would you respond differently to the players in the text?
- To do this you have to enter the character and work your way through the scene.

This example is Mark 12:41-44 (NIV)

1. Take the role of a millionaire giving £/\$10,000 and then hearing Jesus' comments.
2. Take the role of this woman on social security giving £/\$2 then hearing the comment.

<sup>41</sup>Jesus sat down opposite the place where the offerings were put and watched the crowd putting their money into the temple treasury. Many rich people threw in large amounts. <sup>42</sup>But a poor widow came and put in two very small copper coins, worth only a fraction of a penny.

<sup>43</sup>Calling his disciples to him, Jesus said, "I tell you the truth, this poor widow has put more into the treasury than all the others. <sup>44</sup>They all gave out of their wealth; but she, out of her poverty, put in everything—all she had to live on."

## Look for the Drama

In this technique you need to be a bit familiar with narrative. What you are looking for is the action that makes the story work. Look at Mark 12:41-44 above.

First of all find the drama –

- What is it that grabs attention in the text?
- Where are people challenged in their thinking / disturbed / upset?
- What takes the events from being common so no one would notice, to being worthy of being recorded?

Now think of a modern day story that has the same drama but in a modern day context.