

# The Five Marker Method for Biblical Meditation or How to Daily Delight in & Deliberate on Scripture

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'How blessed is the man who ....delights in the law of the LORD, and in His law he meditates day and night, and he will be like a tree firmly planted by streams of water which yields its fruit in season and its leaf does not wither and in whatever he does he prospers' Psalm 1:1f

'While I was staying at Nailsworth, it pleased the Lord to teach me a truth...the benefit of which I have not lost though now more than 40 years have passed. The point is this: I saw more clearly than ever, that the first great & primary business to which I ought to attend every day was to have my soul happy/content in the Lord...how my inner man might be nourished. Before this my practice had been, at least 10 years previously,...to give myself to prayer after being dressed in the morning. Now, I saw, that the most important thing I had to do was give myself to the reading of the Word of God & to meditation on it, that my heart might be comforted, encouraged, warned, reprov'd, instructed; & that thus, while meditating my heart might be brought into experiential communion with the Lord!... It often astonishes me that I did not sooner see this...it is as plain to me as anything that the first thing the child of God has to do morning by morning is to obtain food for the inner man...Now what is the food for the inner man? Not prayer, but the Word of God & not the simple reading of it so that it only passes through our minds, but considering what we read, pondering over it & applying it to our hearts...I dwell so particularly on this point because of the immense spiritual profit.' George Mueller

The PROMISES for one who meditates on the Scripture are glorious beyond description. Psalm 19 alone promises you will be revived, filled with joy, given great wisdom to live by, kept from sin, rewarded bountifully as you obey by grace, & intimate knowledge and fellowship with God. This is just a small sample of the bountiful blessings the Lord gives His people as they meditate on His Word.

You must have a PLACE, TIME, & METHOD to meditate on God's Word and to mine the glorious riches. A Place where you and the Lord can be alone without interruptions, a sacred time which you guard each day for you and the Lord to fellowship together, & a method to guide your meditation.

## THE FIVE MARKER METHOD

Most systematic methods for meditation on the Word have several flaws which limit their effectiveness. Most of us 'get behind' in our readings and sooner or later we give up. Moreover, many systematic methods are devised in such a way that you may spend weeks without reading any portions in the New Testament & may find yourself reading Levitical laws for days on end! The Five Marker Method has a systematic and flexible approach which can be a blessing as you seek to become a 'daily delightful deliberator' on all of God's Word. The Bible can be divided up into five sections based on the content of the scripture:

1. OT History: Genesis-Esther;
2. OT 'Wisdom': Job-Song of Solomon;
3. OT Prophets: Isaiah-Malachi.
4. NT Gospels/History: Matthew-Acts;
5. NT Letters which explain the Gospels: Romans-Revelation.

Place 5 markers (you can purchase a single insert for your Bible with 5 or more markers) at Genesis, Job, Isaiah, Matthew & Romans. During your 'daily deliberations' you will read/meditate on a chapter or less in these 5 sections of scripture. Read through your 5 readings fairly quickly & then pick portions to meditate on. You have great flexibility in the amount you read and your meditations. You may find the Lord Jesus wants you to repeatedly meditate on the same portion of Scripture for a week! Be flexible as the Holy Spirit guides your meditation. When you come to the end of any of the 5 sections, simply move the marker back to the beginning of that section! With this method you will systematically read & meditate on all the Scripture but you will do it in a way in which you will have flexibility and can experience wonderful blessings from the Holy Spirit as He guides & feeds you God's Word. (Note: If you desire to use a systematic plan which does list specific readings for each day—Robert Murray M'Cheyne's Bible Plan is the best!)

## The Five Marker Method (continued)

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- As you read scripture it is absolutely essential to MEDITATE on the Word. It is too easy for the Word to go in one ear & out the other. We must take the time to chew & stew on the Word, turning it over & over & over in our minds & prayerfully talking to God about what we are reading and feeding on.
- Meditate using the HEAD, HEART, FEET principle. First seek the Lord for true understanding of the Word in your mind. Ask Him to teach you the truth. Then prayerfully seek the Lord that He might change the desires and delights of your heart so that the Word will transform your innermost being. Lastly, pray that the Lord might transform you by His Word in such a way that it will powerfully effect how you live and act.
- Meditate using the OBSERVATION, INTERPRETATION, APPLICATION principle. As you meditate it takes time to carefully observe the details of the text. Ask the Lord to give you eyes to see the truth. Next meditate on the interpretation; that is, ask yourself what did this mean to the original audience back then. Last of all pray about applications; that is, what does this mean to me today.
- Use a notebook and pen as you meditate. It is very helpful to write down many of your thoughts and to keep notes of what the Lord is teaching you.
- As you meditate, ASK KEY QUESTIONS. Is there a teaching to treasure? Is there a doctrine to digest? Is there a command to obey? Is there a promise to believe? Is there a sin to confess or avoid? Is there a warning to heed? Is there a verse to memorize? Is there a truth which reveals the glorious character of God the Father, Son, Holy Spirit? Is there a truth which humbles our pride? etc etc
- As you meditate ask the Lord to give you the proper ATTITUDE: joyful gratitude for the gift of the scripture which enables you to have an intimate relationship with Him and hear His voice; reverence and awe to be allowed to commune with our Holy Holy Holy God; a prayerful heart which is completely dependent on the Holy Spirit to reveal the truth; humble submission to the Word allowing it to mold our belief and behavior and a willingness to follow Jesus; a teachable spirit which seeks to hear God's Word and not harden our hearts.

As LEADERS in our homes we are called to be "daily delightful deliberators" and to lead our families in seeking the Lord. As you use the Five Marker Method you can incorporate it into family worship. You may assign your family the same readings each day which you have meditated on in the morning so that you all will be meditating on the Word together. In addition, you may use these same texts in your family devotion times that day, perhaps one of the passages in the morning and another during the evening.

As you seek to become a "daily delightful deliberator" on God's Word, it certainly takes more than 20 or 30 minutes a day. Seek the Lord to enable you to set apart the TIME which is necessary to really grow in knowing Him! As you meditate with the Five Marker Method you may find it a blessing to also commit yourself to studying individual books of the Bible by seeking to 'Master' a book by studying it thoroughly over several years.