

Meditation for Faithful Christians



“Brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy-- meditate on these things. (Philippians 4:8-9)

Bob Thiel, Ph.D.

Meditation for Faithful Christians

Copyright © 2024 by Nazarene Books. ISBN 9781636600833. Booklet produced for the *Continuing Church of God and Successor*, a corporation sole. 1036 W. Grand Avenue, Grover Beach, California, 93433 USA. Edition 1.1.

Front Cover: Photograph was in the public domain from Pixabay.

Biblical quotes are mostly taken from the New King James Version (Thomas Nelson, Copyright © 1997; used by permission) sometimes abbreviated as NKJV, but normally shown without any abbreviation. Anything shown between { } means this author added something to a quote for clarity.

Contents

1. Meditation for Faithful Christians	p. 3
2. Eastern Meditation	p. 4
3. Biblical Meditation: Old Testament	p. 13
4. Psalm 37 and Psalm 73	p. 29
5. Biblical Meditation: New Testament	p. 33
6. Men and Women Are Different and Often Think Differently	p. 40
7. Some Meditation-Related Comments from the old Radio/Worldwide Church of God	p. 44
8. Concluding Comments	p. 49
Contact Information	p. 51

1. Meditation for Faithful Christians

Prayer, Bible study, fasting, and meditation, these are all areas that faithful Christians should be involved in.

One could say that Christian meditation is the process of deliberately focusing on specific thoughts (such as a Bible passage) and reflecting on their meaning in the context of the love of God and the wisdom of His commandments.

Living in California, you often run into people who meditate or advise meditation.

In general, the more common types of meditation that are suggested are Eastern forms, such as those that may be associated with yoga.

While there is value in meditation, is that the type that the Bible endorses?

If not, why not?

This booklet will go over some aspects of Eastern meditation, numerous scriptures as well as various Church of God perspectives on meditation.

The New King James Version of the Bible has the terms meditate, meditates, and meditation 29 times. Plus, the word think and thinks 69 times. What goes on in your mind is important to God.

By reading and praying about meditation, you should have many reasons why faithful Christians should meditate as well as some tips to learn about things you can, and even should, meditate upon.

2. Eastern Meditation

What about thinking or meditating as promoted by Eastern sources?

Well, Eastern meditation tends to focus on self and often a word or expression called a mantra. Technically, a mantra is a word or sound repeated for the intent aid concentration during meditation.

Encyclopedia.com has the following in its article on Eastern meditation:

In all the meditation traditions originating in ancient India, emphasis is placed on finding a quiet, solitary place (the wilderness, a monastery, or an ashram or retreat) and assuming a sitting posture that will be conducive to meditation. The most famous of these postures, or *asanas*, is the “lotus position,” whereby the meditator sits with legs folded and feet resting on the thigh or knees. The hands are kept folded in the lap or in a special gesture called a *mudra*, and the eyes are kept closed or slightly open in an unfocused, downward-looking gaze. The back is kept straight to enhance alertness and to help the “inner channels” of the mystical body open up and run smoothly.

Various techniques for “fixing” the attention (*trataka*) were developed in later esoteric Hindu traditions, all of which were meant to induce the trance state called *samadhi*. In some cases the practitioner was instructed to fix his or her attention on certain places in the body—the crown of the head, the spot between the eyebrows, the tip of the nose, the navel, and so on—in order to gather one's mental energy at a single point. In other instances, the practitioner was instructed to focus on a small object such as a speck on the wall or a mustard seed, or to stare at a distant object to the exclusion of all others in one's purview, or to focus on one or another of the Sanskrit letters or some other image. Meditation on those powerful, sacred sounds known as mantras (the most famous of which is “om”) was especially common. ...

Other Mahayana traditions are more devotional in their emphasis. Here, meditation takes the form of fixing the mind on the Buddha or bodhisattva to whom one is devoted and whom one asks for help. In these traditions, prayers or *mantras* become the centerpiece of meditation practice, or the name of one of the Buddhas or bodhisattvas is invoked repeatedly. (Meditation, Eastern. Encyclopedia.com <https://www.encyclopedia.com/history/dictionaries-thesauruses-pictures-and-press-releases/meditation-eastern> viewed 05/23/24)

Although nominal professors of Christ get involved with such things, real faithful Christians do not wish to put themselves in some type of pagan-related trance.

Here is some information about meditation from Calm.com:

A mantra is a sound, word, or phrase that's repeated during meditation. It can serve as a focal point for your mind, helping to anchor you in the present moment and quiet the chatter of thoughts. Mantras are sometimes derived from spiritual traditions, such as Hinduism, Buddhism, and yoga, but they can also be simple, even nonsensical, sounds or phrases that resonate with you. ...

Mantra meditation can cultivate a deeper understanding of your thoughts, emotions, and physical sensations. By observing your mind without judgment, you can gain valuable insights into your inner workings and foster self-acceptance and personal growth. ...

Mantra meditation may cultivate a deep sense of inner peace and tranquility, even when it feels like there's chaos all around you. The repetitive practice can help you detach from the rush of daily life, so you can find moments of stillness and serenity amidst the hustle and bustle. (<https://www.calm.com/blog/mantra-meditation> accessed 05/16/24)

How focusing on a word, particular a pagan or nonsensical one fosters 'self-acceptance,' is not clear to me. That said, that is not biblical meditation. The New Testament tells faithful Christians to judge themselves (1 Corinthians 11:31, which is contrary to what some associated with Eastern meditation promote.

The idea of repeating a mantra does not foster true personal growth. Related to the most common mantra, the sound “Om” is composed of three syllables: A-U-M (or A-Uṁ in Sanskrit). Each syllable is claimed to represent a different aspect of existence:

- “A” represents creation, birth, or the beginning of the universe.
- “U” represents preservation, sustenance, or the continuation of the universe.
- “M” represents destruction, dissolution, or the end of the universe.

To repeatedly state this--basically meaning begin, continue, and end--makes no sense for a Christian (nor others for that matter) to do. Jesus, Himself, taught, “do not use vain repetitions as the heathen do” (Matthew 6:7).

The Yogic Encyclopedia falsely asserted that AUM represents the Holy Spirit of Christianity (AUM: What Is the Meaning of AUM? <https://www.ananda.org/yogapedia/aum/#:~:text=What%20Is%20the%20Meaning%20of,thoughts%20%E2%80%94%20exists%20in%20Aum.> accessed 05/24/24). That is wrong to believe, hence another reason to not focus on AUM.

As far as the self-orientation of worldly meditation, the Bible warns:

⁴ The wicked in his proud countenance does not seek God; God is in none of his thoughts. (Psalm 10:4)

³ For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith. (Romans 12:3)

Our faith is not to be in mindless or pagan-oriented words – the true God is to be in our thoughts.

Notice also the following from Calm.com:

Mantra meditation FAQs: What is mantra meditation?

Mantra meditation is a form of meditation that involves repeating a sacred sound, word, or phrase to focus the mind and promote relaxation. In giving your mind a simple task to focus on, you allow your thoughts and worries to fade away.

What is the 5-word mantra meditation?

One popular mantra is “Om Mani Padme Hum,” which is believed to bring compassion, wisdom and peace. It means {AUM} “The jewel in the lotus.”

What are the 3 mantras?

There are many mantras to choose from. Try out three common mantras to aid your meditation.

1. **Om:** Said to represent the primordial sound of the universe, this is a sacred sound in many spiritual traditions. It’s often chanted to begin and end meditation sessions.
2. **So hum:** This mantra is believed to harmonize the body's energy flow, promoting wellbeing and vitality. It means “I am that.”
3. **Lokah samastah sukhino bhavantu:** This mantra translates to “May all beings be happy and free from suffering.” It's a powerful expression of compassion and well-wishing for all living things. (<https://www.calm.com/blog/mantra-meditation>)

The above type of meditation is not biblical. The mantras advised are not sacred.

The Apostle John wrote:

² Beloved, I pray that you may prosper in all things and be in health, just as your soul prospers. (3 John 2)

His writings and others in the Bible teach how to live, so that can be accomplished.

However, simply repeating a Hindu expression that calls for people to do better or that there is a “jewel in the lotus” does not accomplish that.

Calm.com also posted:

Is there a right or wrong way to do mantra meditation?

The beauty of mantra meditation lies in its simplicity and flexibility—there's no right or wrong way to do it. (<https://www.calm.com/blog/mantra-meditation>)

There are right and wrong ways to meditate as far as the Bible is concerned. Christians are to be able to “discern both good and evil” (Hebrews 5:14) and realize that non-Christians are not as concerned about avoiding evil.

Demons are most likely pleased when people repeat pagan or non-sensical mantras.

Remember the Apostle James wrote:

¹⁴ What does it profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can faith save him? ¹⁵ If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food, ¹⁶ and one of you says to them, “Depart in peace, be warmed and filled,” but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what does it profit? ¹⁷ Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.

¹⁸ But someone will say, “You have faith, and I have works.” Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. ¹⁹ You believe that there is one God.

You do well. Even the demons believe – and tremble! (James 2:14-19)

Repeating mantras does not provide what others need.

And while some may argue that the same is true for biblical meditation, that is not the case.

Why?

Because proper biblical meditation should lead to actions that help the meditator as well as others.

Here is something that the old Worldwide Church of God (WCG) published on Eastern Meditation:

There are many Eastern meditation traditions, but by far the most popular in the West is Transcendental Meditation promulgated by Guru Maharishi Maheshi Yogi. ...

The technique involves the meditator sitting upright in a comfortable position, closing his eyes, and silently repeating a mantra, a few syllables drawn from the Vedas (Hindu holy books) and chosen for the effect of the sound rather than for the meaning. Each meditator is given his own special mantra, and he is not supposed to divulge it to others.

If the meditator is proficient, his mantra will eventually become so refined that the sound will cease and so will his thoughts. The mind will “transcend” the divided consciousness of everyday awareness and achieve a higher consciousness where one can experience the “pure awareness.” (Graunke PD. Meditation and Mantras - Paradise Regained? Good News, December 1976)

So, there have been warnings since last century about mantras and Transcendental Meditation (TM). WCG also noted:

Penetrate the outward facade of scientific jargon, and you find

that Hindu religious traditions are the foundation and superstructure upon which the TM movement is built.

The first clues come when you are told to bring a clean handkerchief, some sweet fruit, and some flowers to the initiation ceremony, along with your course fee. At the ceremony itself, the teacher performs a ritual that includes the singing of a song in praise to Guru Dev (the Maharishi's teacher), earlier teachers, and sundry Hindu deities. Then the initiate is given his mantra, chosen from the Vedas, and told not to divulge it to others. If TM is strictly a science, why the insistence on Hindu ritualism? Why bow before a picture of Guru Dev and a representation of the Hindu Trimurti of gods, Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva? Why recite a hymn in Sanskrit? Why select syllables from the Vedas? Why keep your mantra a secret?

The influence of Hindu religious thought goes far beyond the matter of the initiation ritual. Beneath the Western terminology and scientific jargon of the TM philosophy is a concept of mind and existence also derived from Hindu theology.

The Maharishi believes in a concept of seven states of consciousness that one must tentatively accept to operate and advance within the TM framework. Dreamless sleep, dreaming, and wakefulness constitute the first three. Transcendental consciousness, the state of pure awareness, is the fourth state and the first one novitiates of TM enter. But to achieve complete enlightenment, the Maharishi believes it is necessary to ascend to the seventh state – Unity with the Absolute. This absolute is defined by some as a mass of undifferentiated, universal consciousness.

In TM literature, it is called by the quasi-scientific term of “the field of pure intelligence.” ...

The Bible teaches that enlightenment and spiritual growth is a matter of a state of grace, not a state of consciousness.

Spiritual insight comes through the gift of the Holy Spirit, and Christians are to be united with Christ, not an absolute. The Bible speaks of meditation - but it is totally different from TM. In biblical contexts, meditation is focused on God's laws and ways – not a mantra. (Graunke PD. Meditation and Mantras - Paradise Regained? Good News, December 1976)

The Apostle Paul warned:

²⁰ Rather, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice they sacrifice to demons and not to God, and I do not want you to have fellowship with demons. ²¹ You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons; you cannot partake of the Lord's table and of the table of demons. ²² Or do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? Are we stronger than He? (1 Corinthians 10:20-21)

Don't think you can well handle incorporating pagan mantras and related demonically-influenced practices into your life and not suffer spiritually.

The Apostle Paul also warned:

¹ Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, (1 Timothy 4:1)

Pagan forms of meditation can be demonic and many have fallen for it—they are spiritually harmful. Furthermore, studies in the 21st century have also reported that about 10% of people who practice a type of Buddhist-based meditation called 'mindfulness' report increased anxiety and depression (Farias M. Meditation And Mindfulness Have a Dark Side We Don't Talk About. Science Alerts, October 25, 2024).

In the Old Testament, the prophet Elijah mocked the possible meditation of a pagan god (1 Kings 18:27).

Consider also the following in regards to Eastern meditation:

⁵ For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. ⁶ For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. ⁷ Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be. ⁸ So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God. (Romans 8:4-8)

Among other things, the Apostle Paul is saying that it is God's ways, not the ways of the world that truly bring peace.

The way of the world is focused on the wrong things and will end in destruction:

¹⁸ For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross {stake, Greel *stauros*} of Christ: ¹⁹ whose end is destruction, whose god is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame – **who set their mind on earthly things.** ²⁰ For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, ²¹ who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself. (Philippians 3:18-21)

We want to focus on the things of the true God, as the world's focus is wrong.

One of the Psalms states:

¹⁴ Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart
Be acceptable in Your sight,
O Lord, my strength and my Redeemer. (Psalm 19:14)

Repeating nonsensical words or pagan expressions are not the type of meditation that the Bible supports.

3. Biblical Meditation: Old Testament

The Bible itself, in both the Old and New Testaments discusses meditation and what God's people should think about.

In the Bible, to meditate means to think about something, not try to empty one's mind and think of nothing or some word or sound.

The first time we see what is called meditation in scripture is in the Book of Genesis:

⁶³ And Isaac went out to meditate in the field in the evening (Genesis 24:63)

So, we see meditation, biblically going back a long way. Here is the next reference to it in the Bible:

¹ After the death of Moses the servant of the Lord, it came to pass that the Lord spoke to Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' assistant, saying: ...

⁶ Be strong and of good courage, for to this people you shall divide as an inheritance the land which I swore to their fathers to give them. ⁷ Only be strong and very courageous, that you may observe to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may prosper wherever you go. ⁸ This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success. (Joshua 1:1, 6-8)

Notice that God promised Joshua success if he meditated on and observed God's law and commandments.

So, we see that God ties success in with biblically-related meditation. Not just thinking about God's laws, but also by applying them.

As far as God's ways and success go, notice the following from the first Psalm:

¹ Blessed is the man
Who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly,
Nor stands in the path of sinners,
Nor sits in the seat of the scornful;
² But his delight is in the law of the Lord,
And in His law he meditates day and night.
³ He shall be like a tree
Planted by the rivers of water,
That brings forth its fruit in its season,
Whose leaf also shall not wither;
And whatever he does shall prosper. (Psalm 1:1-3)

Meditating on God's laws helps bring success.

As far as meditating at night, decades ago I used to have trouble falling asleep.

So, I would tend to meditate on one of the Ten Commandments each night, rotating them.

Now, I normally fall asleep well. And while I no longer mainly meditate on the Ten Commandments at night, I do tend to think on spiritual/church matters when I lie down to sleep.

Night is also a good time to thank God:

¹ It is good to give thanks to the Lord, And to sing praises to Your name, O Most High; ² To declare Your lovingkindness in the morning, And Your faithfulness every night, (Psalm 92:1-2)

The NKJV has the term 'praise' 237 times and almost all of them are telling us to praise God. That is something to do and meditate about.

Consider also that the New Testament teaches:

¹⁶ Rejoice always, ¹⁷ pray without ceasing, ¹⁸ in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18)

Now, whether you are awake or asleep, God knows your thoughts as King David told Solomon:

⁹ ... God ... serve Him with a loyal heart and with a willing mind; for the Lord searches all hearts and understands all the intent of the thoughts. (1 Chronicles 28:9)

Notice that God knows ALL THOUGHTS AND THE INTENT OF THOUGHTS.

Here is more from the Psalms and nighttime meditation:

⁶ When I remember You on my bed,
I meditate on You in the night watches. (Psalm 63:6)

⁴ Be angry, and do not sin.
Meditate within your heart on your bed, and be still. (Psalm 4:4)

The New Testament adds:

²⁶ "Be angry, and do not sin": do not let the sun go down on your wrath, ²⁷ nor give place to the devil. (Ephesians 4:26-27)

Staying in an anger mode at night is warned against as possibly giving place to the devil – instead meditate on God's ways.

Moses recorded the following:

⁶ "And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. ⁷ You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. ⁸ You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. ⁹ You shall write them on

the doorposts of your house and on your gates.
(Deuteronomy 6:6-9)

By having God's words "as frontlets between your eyes" that means thinking about them and by strong implication, meditating upon them.

Here is more on meditation from the 77th Psalm:

⁶ I call to remembrance my song in the night;
I meditate within my heart,
And my spirit makes diligent search. ...

¹¹ I will remember the works of the Lord;
Surely I will remember Your wonders of old.

¹² I will also meditate on all Your work,
And talk of Your deeds.

¹³ Your way, O God, is in the sanctuary;
Who is so great a God as our God? (Psalm 77:6, 11-13)

Here are some reasons why you should meditate on God's laws and ways:

⁷ The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul;
The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple;
⁸ The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart;
The commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes;
(Psalm 19:7-8)

Yes, understanding God's ways better makes us wiser.

The Bible also points to meditating about the Proverbs:

³ My mouth shall speak wisdom,
And the meditation of my heart shall give understanding.
⁴ I will incline my ear to a proverb;
I will disclose my dark saying on the harp. (Psalm 49:3-4)

The Book of Proverbs begins with the following:

¹ The proverbs of Solomon the son of David, king of Israel:

² To know wisdom and instruction,

To perceive the words of understanding,

³ To receive the instruction of wisdom,

Justice, judgment, and equity;

⁴ To give prudence to the simple,

To the young man knowledge and discretion –

⁵ A wise man will hear and increase learning,

And a man of understanding will attain wise counsel,

⁶ To understand a proverb and an enigma,

The words of the wise and their riddles. (Proverbs 1:1-6)

Reading, meditating about, and understanding the Proverbs helps you become wiser as well as to better appreciate some of God's wisdom.

God wants us to forsake the wrong way of thinking:

⁷ Let the wicked forsake his way,

And the unrighteous man his thoughts;

Let him return to the Lord,

And He will have mercy on him;

And to our God,

For He will abundantly pardon.

⁸ “For My thoughts are not your thoughts,

Nor are your ways My ways,” says the Lord.

⁹ “For as the heavens are higher than the earth,

So are My ways higher than your ways,

And My thoughts than your thoughts. (Isaiah 55:7-9)

Yes, God's thoughts and ways are higher than ours, but as we meditate on Him and His ways, we become more like Him, including in our thoughts. Notice the following:

⁹ How can a young man cleanse his way?

By taking heed according to Your word.

¹⁰ With my whole heart I have sought You;

Oh, let me not wander from Your commandments! (Psalm 119:9-10)

Our ways, including our minds, can be cleansed by truly seeking God and His ways.

The New Testament adds:

⁵ Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, (Philippians 2:5)

That is what we are to strive to do with our meditation.

Let's look at more verses in Proverbs:

⁵ The thoughts of the righteous are right,
But the counsels of the wicked are deceitful. (Proverbs 12:5)

²⁶ The thoughts of the wicked are an abomination to the Lord, But the words of the pure are pleasant. (Proverbs 15:26)

³ Commit your works to the Lord,
And your thoughts will be established. (Proverbs 16:3)

Your thoughts and works are connected--focus them on God's ways of love.

The Bible says:

²² He raised up for them David as king, to whom also He gave testimony and said, 'I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after My own heart, who will do all My will. (Acts 13:22)

Notice that David was a man after God's heart, BEFORE he was made king.

David wrote dozens of the Psalms and meditated on God's ways.

For example, he wrote in the following Psalms:

¹ Give ear to my words, O Lord,
Consider my meditation.

² Give heed to the voice of my cry,
My King and my God,
For to You I will pray.

³ My voice You shall hear in the morning, O Lord;
In the morning I will direct it to You,
And I will look up. (Psalm 5:1-3)

¹ Hear my voice, O God, in my meditation;
Preserve my life from fear of the enemy. (Psalm 64:1)

⁵ I remember the days of old;
I meditate on all Your works;
I muse on the work of Your hands.

⁶ I spread out my hands to You;
My soul longs for You like a thirsty land. (Psalm 143:5-6)

Here is more from other Psalms:

³⁴ May my meditation be sweet to Him;
I will be glad in the Lord. (Psalm 104:34)

⁵ I will meditate on the glorious splendor of Your majesty,
And on Your wondrous works.

⁶ Men shall speak of the might of Your awesome acts,
And I will declare Your greatness. (Psalm 145:5-6)

The Bible urges people to meditate on things related to God.

Psalm 119 is the longest psalm in the Bible. It specifically mentions meditating 8 times, beginning with verse 15:

¹⁵ I will **meditate** on Your precepts, And contemplate Your ways. ¹⁶ I will delight myself in Your statutes; I will not forget Your word.

¹⁷ Deal bountifully with Your servant, That I may live and keep Your word. ¹⁸ Open my eyes, that I may see Wondrous things from Your law. ¹⁹ I am a stranger in the earth; Do not hide Your commandments from me. ²⁰ My soul breaks with longing For Your judgments at all times. ²¹ You rebuke the proud – the cursed, Who stray from Your commandments. ²² Remove from me reproach and contempt, For I have kept Your testimonies. ²³ Princes also sit and speak against me, But Your servant meditates on Your statutes. ²⁴ Your testimonies also are my delight And my counselors.

²⁵ My soul clings to the dust; Revive me according to Your word. ²⁶ I have declared my ways, and You answered me; Teach me Your statutes. ²⁷ Make me understand the way of Your precepts; So shall I meditate on Your wonderful works. ²⁸ My soul melts from heaviness; Strengthen me according to Your word. ²⁹ Remove from me the way of lying, And grant me Your law graciously. ³⁰ I have chosen the way of truth; Your judgments I have laid before me. ³¹ I cling to Your testimonies; O Lord, do not put me to shame! ³² I will run the course of Your commandments, For You shall enlarge my heart.

³³ Teach me, O Lord, the way of Your statutes, And I shall keep it to the end. ³⁴ Give me understanding, and I shall keep Your law; Indeed, I shall observe it with my whole heart. ³⁵ Make me walk in the path of Your commandments, For I delight in it. ³⁶ Incline my heart to Your testimonies, And not to covetousness. ³⁷ Turn away my eyes from looking at worthless things, And revive me in Your way. ³⁸ Establish Your word to Your servant, Who is devoted to fearing You. ³⁹ Turn away my reproach which I dread, For Your judgments are good. ⁴⁰ Behold, I long for Your precepts; Revive me in Your righteousness.

⁴¹ Let Your mercies come also to me, O Lord – Your salvation according to Your word. ⁴² So shall I have an answer for him who reproaches me, For I trust in Your word. ⁴³ And take not

the word of truth utterly out of my mouth, For I have hoped in Your ordinances. ⁴⁴ So shall I keep Your law continually, Forever and ever. ⁴⁵ And I will walk at liberty, For I seek Your precepts. ⁴⁶ I will speak of Your testimonies also before kings, And will not be ashamed. ⁴⁷ And I will delight myself in Your commandments, Which I love. ⁴⁸ My hands also I will lift up to Your commandments, Which I love, And I will meditate on Your statutes.

⁴⁹ Remember the word to Your servant, Upon which You have caused me to hope. ⁵⁰ This is my comfort in my affliction, For Your word has given me life. ⁵¹ The proud have me in great derision, Yet I do not turn aside from Your law. ⁵² I remembered Your judgments of old, O Lord, And have comforted myself. ⁵³ Indignation has taken hold of me Because of the wicked, who forsake Your law. ⁵⁴ Your statutes have been my songs In the house of my pilgrimage. ⁵⁵ I remember Your name in the night, O Lord, And I keep Your law. ⁵⁶ This has become mine, Because I kept Your precepts.

⁵⁷ You are my portion, O Lord; I have said that I would keep Your words. ⁵⁸ I entreated Your favor with my whole heart; Be merciful to me according to Your word. ⁵⁹ I thought about my ways, And turned my feet to Your testimonies. ⁶⁰ I made haste, and did not delay To keep Your commandments. ⁶¹ The cords of the wicked have bound me, But I have not forgotten Your law. ⁶² At midnight I will rise to give thanks to You, Because of Your righteous judgments. ⁶³ I am a companion of all who fear You, And of those who keep Your precepts. ⁶⁴ The earth, O Lord, is full of Your mercy; Teach me Your statutes.

⁶⁵ You have dealt well with Your servant, O Lord, according to Your word. ⁶⁶ Teach me good judgment and knowledge, For I believe Your commandments. ⁶⁷ Before I was afflicted I went astray, But now I keep Your word. ⁶⁸ You are good, and do good; Teach me Your statutes. ⁶⁹ The proud have forged a lie against me, But I will keep Your precepts with my whole heart. ⁷⁰ Their heart is as fat as grease, But I delight in Your

law. ⁷¹ It is good for me that I have been afflicted, That I may learn Your statutes. ⁷² The law of Your mouth is better to me Than thousands of coins of gold and silver.

⁷³ Your hands have made me and fashioned me; Give me understanding, that I may learn Your commandments. ⁷⁴ Those who fear You will be glad when they see me, Because I have hoped in Your word. ⁷⁵ I know, O Lord, that Your judgments are right, And that in faithfulness You have afflicted me. ⁷⁶ Let, I pray, Your merciful kindness be for my comfort, According to Your word to Your servant. ⁷⁷ Let Your tender mercies come to me, that I may live; For Your law is my delight. ⁷⁸ Let the proud be ashamed, For they treated me wrongfully with falsehood; But I will meditate on Your precepts. ⁷⁹ Let those who fear You turn to me, Those who know Your testimonies. ⁸⁰ Let my heart be blameless regarding Your statutes, That I may not be ashamed.

⁸¹ My soul faints for Your salvation, But I hope in Your word. ⁸² My eyes fail from searching Your word, Saying, "When will You comfort me?" ⁸³ For I have become like a wineskin in smoke, Yet I do not forget Your statutes. ⁸⁴ How many are the days of Your servant? When will You execute judgment on those who persecute me? ⁸⁵ The proud have dug pits for me, Which is not according to Your law. ⁸⁶ All Your commandments are faithful; They persecute me wrongfully; Help me! ⁸⁷ They almost made an end of me on earth, But I did not forsake Your precepts. ⁸⁸ Revive me according to Your lovingkindness, So that I may keep the testimony of Your mouth.

⁸⁹ Forever, O Lord, Your word is settled in heaven. ⁹⁰ Your faithfulness endures to all generations; You established the earth, and it abides. ⁹¹ They continue this day according to Your ordinances, For all are Your servants. ⁹² Unless Your law had been my delight, I would then have perished in my affliction. ⁹³ I will never forget Your precepts, For by them You have given me life. ⁹⁴ I am Yours, save me; For I have sought

Your precepts. ⁹⁵ The wicked wait for me to destroy me, But I will consider Your testimonies. ⁹⁶ I have seen the consummation of all perfection, But Your commandment is exceedingly broad.

⁹⁷ Oh, how I love Your law! It is my meditation all the day. ⁹⁸ You, through Your commandments, make me wiser than my enemies; For they are ever with me. ⁹⁹ I have more understanding than all my teachers, For Your testimonies are my meditation. ¹⁰⁰ I understand more than the ancients, Because I keep Your precepts. ¹⁰¹ I have restrained my feet from every evil way, That I may keep Your word. ¹⁰² I have not departed from Your judgments, For You Yourself have taught me. ¹⁰³ How sweet are Your words to my taste, Sweeter than honey to my mouth! ¹⁰⁴ Through Your precepts I get understanding; Therefore I hate every false way. {That would include things like Eastern-Hindu meditation.}

¹⁰⁵ Your word is a lamp to my feet And a light to my path. ¹⁰⁶ I have sworn and confirmed That I will keep Your righteous judgments. ¹⁰⁷ I am afflicted very much; Revive me, O Lord, according to Your word. ¹⁰⁸ Accept, I pray, the freewill offerings of my mouth, O Lord, And teach me Your judgments. ¹⁰⁹ My life is continually in my hand, Yet I do not forget Your law. ¹¹⁰ The wicked have laid a snare for me, Yet I have not strayed from Your precepts. ¹¹¹ Your testimonies I have taken as a heritage forever, For they are the rejoicing of my heart. ¹¹² I have inclined my heart to perform Your statutes Forever, to the very end.

¹¹³ I hate the double-minded, But I love Your law. ¹¹⁴ You are my hiding place and my shield; I hope in Your word. ¹¹⁵ Depart from me, you evildoers, For I will keep the commandments of my God! ¹¹⁶ Uphold me according to Your word, that I may live; And do not let me be ashamed of my hope. ¹¹⁷ Hold me up, and I shall be safe, And I shall observe Your statutes continually. ¹¹⁸ You reject all those who stray from Your statutes, For their deceit is falsehood. ¹¹⁹ You put

away all the wicked of the earth like dross; Therefore I love Your testimonies. ¹²⁰ My flesh trembles for fear of You, And I am afraid of Your judgments.

¹²¹ I have done justice and righteousness; Do not leave me to my oppressors. ¹²² Be surety for Your servant for good; Do not let the proud oppress me. ¹²³ My eyes fail from seeking Your salvation And Your righteous word. ¹²⁴ Deal with Your servant according to Your mercy, And teach me Your statutes. ¹²⁵ I am Your servant; Give me understanding, That I may know Your testimonies. ¹²⁶ It is time for You to act, O Lord, For they have regarded Your law as void. ¹²⁷ Therefore I love Your commandments More than gold, yes, than fine gold! ¹²⁸ Therefore all Your precepts concerning all things I consider to be right; I hate every false way.

¹²⁹ Your testimonies are wonderful; Therefore my soul keeps them. ¹³⁰ The entrance of Your words gives light; It gives understanding to the simple. ¹³¹ I opened my mouth and panted, For I longed for Your commandments. ¹³² Look upon me and be merciful to me, As Your custom is toward those who love Your name. ¹³³ Direct my steps by Your word, And let no iniquity have dominion over me. ¹³⁴ Redeem me from the oppression of man, That I may keep Your precepts. ¹³⁵ Make Your face shine upon Your servant, And teach me Your statutes. ¹³⁶ Rivers of water run down from my eyes, Because men do not keep Your law.

¹³⁷ Righteous are You, O Lord, And upright are Your judgments. ¹³⁸ Your testimonies, which You have commanded, Are righteous and very faithful. ¹³⁹ My zeal has consumed me, Because my enemies have forgotten Your words. ¹⁴⁰ Your word is very pure; Therefore Your servant loves it. ¹⁴¹ I am small and despised, Yet I do not forget Your precepts. ¹⁴² Your righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, And Your law is truth. ¹⁴³ Trouble and anguish have overtaken me, Yet Your commandments are my

delights. ¹⁴⁴ The righteousness of Your testimonies is everlasting; Give me understanding, and I shall live.

¹⁴⁵ I cry out with my whole heart; Hear me, O Lord! I will keep Your statutes. ¹⁴⁶ I cry out to You; Save me, and I will keep Your testimonies. ¹⁴⁷ I rise before the dawning of the morning, And cry for help; I hope in Your word. ¹⁴⁸ My eyes are awake through the night watches, That I may meditate on Your word. ¹⁴⁹ Hear my voice according to Your lovingkindness; O Lord, revive me according to Your justice. ¹⁵⁰ They draw near who follow after wickedness; They are far from Your law. ¹⁵¹ You are near, O Lord, And all Your commandments are truth. ¹⁵² Concerning Your testimonies, I have known of old that You have founded them forever.

¹⁵³ Consider my affliction and deliver me, For I do not forget Your law. ¹⁵⁴ Plead my cause and redeem me; Revive me according to Your word. ¹⁵⁵ Salvation is far from the wicked, For they do not seek Your statutes. ¹⁵⁶ Great are Your tender mercies, O Lord; Revive me according to Your judgments. ¹⁵⁷ Many are my persecutors and my enemies, Yet I do not turn from Your testimonies. ¹⁵⁸ I see the treacherous, and am disgusted, Because they do not keep Your word. ¹⁵⁹ Consider how I love Your precepts; Revive me, O Lord, according to Your lovingkindness. ¹⁶⁰ The entirety of Your word is truth, And every one of Your righteous judgments endures forever.

¹⁶¹ Princes persecute me without a cause, But my heart stands in awe of Your word. ¹⁶² I rejoice at Your word As one who finds great treasure. ¹⁶³ I hate and abhor lying, But I love Your law. ¹⁶⁴ Seven times a day I praise You, Because of Your righteous judgments. ¹⁶⁵ Great peace have those who love Your law, And nothing causes them to stumble. ¹⁶⁶ Lord, I hope for Your salvation, And I do Your commandments. ¹⁶⁷ My soul keeps Your testimonies, And I love them exceedingly. ¹⁶⁸ I keep Your precepts and Your testimonies, For all my ways are before You.

¹⁶⁹ Let my cry come before You, O Lord; Give me understanding according to Your word. ¹⁷⁰ Let my supplication come before You; Deliver me according to Your word. ¹⁷¹ My lips shall utter praise, For You teach me Your statutes. ¹⁷² My tongue shall speak of Your word, For all Your commandments are righteousness. ¹⁷³ Let Your hand become my help, For I have chosen Your precepts. ¹⁷⁴ I long for Your salvation, O Lord, And Your law is my delight. ¹⁷⁵ Let my soul live, and it shall praise You; And let Your judgments help me. ¹⁷⁶ I have gone astray like a lost sheep; Seek Your servant, **For I do not forget Your commandments.** (Psalm 119:15-176)

One who meditates on the commandments is not inclined to forget them.

As far as praising God goes, consider the following:

¹ Praise the Lord! Oh, give thanks to the Lord, for He is good! For His mercy endures forever. (Psalm 106:1)

We all need God's mercy, not only can we thank Him for that, we can rest assured His mercy endures forever, despite the fact that we do make mistakes and sin – but God will forgive them if we repent (Acts 3:19) and confess them to Him (1 John 1:9).

Meditation is mentioned in the 9th Psalm.

¹⁴ So that I recount all Your praise, In the gates of the daughter of Zion. I rejoice on Your salvation. ¹⁵ Nations have sunk in a pit they made, Their foot has been captured in a net that they hid. ¹⁶ YHWH has been known, He has done judgment; By a work of his hands The wicked has been snared. Meditation. Selah. ¹⁷ The wicked turn back to Sheol, All nations forgetting God. (Psalm 9;14-17, LSV)

The implication is that the wicked don't properly meditate and they forget the real God.

What you think affects you:

⁵ Will you set your eyes on that which is not?
For riches certainly make themselves wings;
They fly away like an eagle toward heaven.

⁶ Do not eat the bread of a miser,
Nor desire his delicacies;

⁷ For as he thinks in his heart, so is he. (Proverbs 23:5-7)

Meditating on a mantra sounds consistent with setting your eyes on that which is not. That said, the above seems also a command against covetousness. But it is also basically saying that to a degree you are what you think about.

Interestingly, the Old Testament also tells us about how NOT to think:

¹⁷ "You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, nor his male servant, nor his female servant, nor his ox, nor his donkey, nor anything that is your neighbor's." (Exodus 20:17)

¹⁷ Let none of you think evil in your heart against your neighbor; And do not love a false oath. For all these are things that I hate,' Says the Lord. (Zechariah 8:17)

Do not think evil in your heart against others. By the way, people thought evil in their hearts towards Jesus and He rebuked them for it (Matthew 9:4-6).

Notice something towards the end of the Old Testament:

¹⁶ Then those who feared the Lord spoke to one another,
And the Lord listened and heard them; So a book of remembrance was written before Him For those who fear the Lord And who meditate on His name. (Malachi 3:16)

Notice that God mentions those who meditate on His name are included in His "book of remembrance."

That book may possibly also tie in with the “Book of Life” and/or the books mentioned in Revelation 20:12.

That said, of course, we are not just to live our lives in contemplation, but also still to do physical work:

¹⁰ For even when we were with you, we commanded you this: If anyone will not work, neither shall he eat. ¹¹ For we hear that there are some who walk among you in a disorderly manner, not working at all, but are busybodies. ¹² Now those who are such we command and exhort through our Lord Jesus Christ that they work in quietness and eat their own bread. (2 Thessalonians 3:10-12)

Consider also that the Old Testament also teaches:

¹⁰ Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with your might; (Ecclesiastes 9:10)

God wants us to be serious about what we do – and not just to have positive thoughts.

4. Psalm 37 and Psalm 73

In times of lowered hope, you might wish to read, and then meditate upon, Psalm 37 and 73.

Here is Psalm 37:

¹ Do not fret because of evildoers, Nor be envious of the workers of iniquity.

² For they shall soon be cut down like the grass, And wither as the green herb.

³ Trust in the Lord, and do good; Dwell in the land, and feed on His faithfulness. ⁴ Delight yourself also in the Lord, And He shall give you the desires of your heart.

⁵ Commit your way to the Lord, Trust also in Him, And He shall bring it to pass.

⁶ He shall bring forth your righteousness as the light, And your justice as the noonday.

⁷ Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him; Do not fret because of him who prospers in his way, Because of the man who brings wicked schemes to pass. ⁸ Cease from anger, and forsake wrath; Do not fret — it only causes harm.

⁹ For evildoers shall be cut off; But those who wait on the Lord, They shall inherit the earth. ¹⁰ For yet a little while and the wicked shall be no more; Indeed, you will look carefully for his place, But it shall be no more. ¹¹ But the meek shall inherit the earth, And shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.

¹² The wicked plots against the just, And gnashes at him with his teeth. ¹³ The Lord laughs at him, For He sees that his day is coming. ¹⁴ The wicked have drawn the sword And have bent their bow, To cast down the poor and needy, To slay

those who are of upright conduct. ¹⁵ Their sword shall enter their own heart, And their bows shall be broken.

¹⁶ A little that a righteous man has Is better than the riches of many wicked. ¹⁷ For the arms of the wicked shall be broken, But the Lord upholds the righteous.

¹⁸ The Lord knows the days of the upright, And their inheritance shall be forever. ¹⁹ They shall not be ashamed in the evil time, And in the days of famine they shall be satisfied. ²⁰ But the wicked shall perish; And the enemies of the Lord, Like the splendor of the meadows, shall vanish. Into smoke they shall vanish away.

²¹ The wicked borrows and does not repay, But the righteous shows mercy and gives. ²² For those blessed by Him shall inherit the earth, But those cursed by Him shall be cut off.

²³ The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord, And He delights in his way. ²⁴ Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down; For the Lord upholds him with His hand.

²⁵ I have been young, and now am old; Yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken, Nor his descendants begging bread. ²⁶ He is ever merciful, and lends; And his descendants are blessed.

²⁷ Depart from evil, and do good; And dwell forevermore. ²⁸ For the Lord loves justice, And does not forsake His saints; They are preserved forever, But the descendants of the wicked shall be cut off. ²⁹ The righteous shall inherit the land, And dwell in it forever.

³⁰ The mouth of the righteous speaks wisdom, And his tongue talks of justice. ³¹ The law of his God is in his heart; None of his steps shall slide.

³² The wicked watches the righteous, And seeks to slay him. ³³ The Lord will not leave him in his hand, Nor condemn him when he is judged.

³⁴ Wait on the Lord, And keep His way, And He shall exalt you to inherit the land; When the wicked are cut off, you shall see it. ³⁵ I have seen the wicked in great power, And spreading himself like a native green tree. ³⁶ Yet he passed away, and behold, he was no more; Indeed I sought him, but he could not be found.

³⁷ Mark the blameless man, and observe the upright; For the future of that man is peace. ³⁸ But the transgressors shall be destroyed together; The future of the wicked shall be cut off.

³⁹ But the salvation of the righteous is from the Lord; He is their strength in the time of trouble. ⁴⁰ And the Lord shall help them and deliver them; He shall deliver them from the wicked, And save them, Because they trust in Him. (Psalm 37:1-40)

Psalm 73, in my mind, is also related to this:

¹ Truly God is good to Israel, To such as are pure in heart. ² But as for me, my feet had almost stumbled; My steps had nearly slipped. ³ For I was envious of the boastful, When I saw the prosperity of the wicked.

⁴ For there are no pangs in their death, But their strength is firm. ⁵ They are not in trouble as other men, Nor are they plagued like other men. ⁶ Therefore pride serves as their necklace; Violence covers them like a garment. ⁷ Their eyes bulge with abundance; They have more than heart could wish. ⁸ They scoff and speak wickedly concerning oppression; They speak loftily. ⁹ They set their mouth against the heavens, And their tongue walks through the earth. ¹⁰ Therefore his people return here, And waters of a full cup are drained by them. ¹¹ And they say, "How does God know? And is there knowledge in the Most High?" ¹² Behold, these are the ungodly, Who are always at ease; They increase in riches. ¹³ Surely I have cleansed my heart in vain, And washed my hands in innocence. ¹⁴ For all day long I have been plagued, And chastened every morning.

¹⁵ If I had said, "I will speak thus," Behold, I would have been untrue to the generation of Your children. ¹⁶ When I thought how to understand this, It was too painful for me — ¹⁷ Until I went into the sanctuary of God; Then I understood their end.

¹⁸ Surely You set them in slippery places; You cast them down to destruction. ¹⁹ Oh, how they are brought to desolation, as in a moment! They are utterly consumed with terrors. ²⁰ As a dream when one awakes, So, Lord, when You awake, You shall despise their image.

²¹ Thus my heart was grieved, And I was vexed in my mind. ²² I was so foolish and ignorant; I was like a beast before You. ²³ Nevertheless I am continually with You; You hold me by my right hand. ²⁴ You will guide me with Your counsel, And afterward receive me to glory.

²⁵ Whom have I in heaven but You? And there is none upon earth that I desire besides You. ²⁶ My flesh and my heart fail; But God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.

²⁷ For indeed, those who are far from You shall perish; You have destroyed all those who desert You for harlotry. ²⁸ But it is good for me to draw near to God; I have put my trust in the Lord God, That I may declare all Your works. (Psalm 73:1-28)

These Psalms might assist you in times of difficulty.

Of course, you can also meditate on the Proverbs, Gospels, etc. as well.

5. Biblical Meditation: New Testament

Meditation and things to think about are also discussed in the New Testament.

The Apostle Paul wrote:

⁴For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds⁵ casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ, (2 Corinthians 10:4-5)

He also wrote:

² Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. (Colossians 3:2)

Jesus said:

³⁴ ... For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.
³⁵ A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good things, and an evil man out of the evil treasure rings forth evil things. (Matthew 12:34-35)

So, if you are thinking good things you are more likely to speak good things.

We are also to be concerned about others and not just ourselves:

³ Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. ⁴ Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others. (Philippians 2:3-4)

We are to love God and our neighbor (Matthew 22:37-39).

Consider that the Apostle James wrote something also that ties into Jesus' words in Matthew 12:34-35:

²⁶ If anyone among you thinks he is religious, and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this one's religion is useless. ²⁷ Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world. (James 1:26-27)

Pure religion starts on the inside but then should be put to action on the outside.

Jesus warned:

²¹ For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, ²² thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lewdness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness. ²³ All these evil things come from within and defile a man. (Mark 7:21-23)

Think about good things, not wrong and improper things.

We are to be diligent as God knows our thoughts:

¹¹ Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest, lest anyone fall according to the same example of disobedience. ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. (Hebrews 4:11-12)

Those diligent in proper meditation are less likely to become disobedient.

Paul told Timothy the prophetic evangelist:

¹³ Till I come, give attention to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. ¹⁴ Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was

given to you by prophecy with the laying on of the hands of the eldership. ¹⁵ Meditate on these things; give yourself entirely to them, that your progress may be evident to all. ¹⁶ Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. Continue in them, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you. (1 Timothy 4:13-16)

You might tell yourself that you are not a prophetic-evangelist so the above does not apply to you.

But, looking at the bigger picture, you should not neglect the spiritual gifts that you have, you should also give attention to reading--the Bible, and also in these days, CCOG literature--plus you should also help and exhort others. Then notice that you should meditate on these things that your progress "may be evident to all." You are to continue in proper doctrine which will help save you and perhaps also one or more of those who come in contact with you.

As far as what Christians should meditate on, the Apostle Paul made it fairly clear when he wrote:

⁸ Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy – meditate on these things. ⁹ The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you. (Philippians 4:8-9)

The Bible is true, God's laws are noble, God is praiseworthy, God is just, His ways are pure, His laws show love, and His ways are of good report and virtue. The Apostle Paul was not restricting meditation to those specific attributes of God and His ways, but they most certainly are included in what a Christian should meditate about.

Consider what Paul wrote in the light of something Jesus taught:

³¹ Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' ³² For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. ³³ But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. (Matthew 6:31-33)

Don't worry, but seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness.

Your meditation should lead to that.

Your meditation should lead to that. We do not need to worry or meditate on what we will say when persecuted (Luke 21:14).

You can meditate instead, for example, on why the kingdom of God is the solution for the world.

Proper meditation helps us better have faith in God and the reality of the kingdom of God.

Realize why humanity, without God's help, cannot usher in utopia. Meditate on the *The Gospel of the Kingdom of God*, which we also have as a free booklet online, translated into over 1,500 languages and dialects at ccog.org. You can think about how much better the world will be in the millennial kingdom than it is now.

In the millennial kingdom there will be an abundance without the crime we see in this age.

That should help give you hope and courage to face the challenges and difficulties you face in this age.

Related to God's Ten Commandments, the ramification of people observing them are massive. Consider:

1. If people put God above all, there would be no crime.

2. If people did not have idols, they would focus on the true religion and not paganism or the wrong focuses on materialism.

3. If people did not take God's name in vain, there would be less anger as well as a real appreciation of what God has done.

4. If people actually kept the Sabbath and meditated during part of it, they would not only rest and there would be less stress in the world, but also they would be more inclined to follow the rest of the commandments.

5. If people honored their parents, there would be less crime as males who listen to their fathers are statistically much, much, less likely to be involved in crime. There would also be other social benefits to people honoring their parents. Plus, the parents need to be honorable, for children to be able to honor them, and that would also have societal benefits.

6. If people did not kill, there would be much less fear in the world. Plus, no need to spend vast amounts of societal wealth on armaments, including military ones. There would also be no abortion.

7. If people did not commit adultery, there would be no rape, no out-of-wedlock children, less abortions, no sexually transmitted diseases, less divorce, less waste of funds on divorce lawyers, and increased happiness.

8. If people did not steal, our goods would be safe and there would be much less need for locks for other than safety purposes. Costs of goods would drop as stores would not have to pay for security or increase prices because of loss through theft.

9. If people did not bear false witness, there would be much less crime. The judicial system would be less needed as well as more effective as people would not lie to cover up their crimes. That would also be a deterrent to crime. Furthermore,

if politicians always told the truth, governance would be so much better.

10. If people did not covet, we would have almost no crime, plus advertising would be more accurate.

That said, there are many, many, more benefits to humanity keeping God's commandments than those few listed above, but perhaps that can give some a start regarding meditating on the greatness of God's laws. More on the Ten Commandments can be found in our free online book, available online at ccog.org titled: *The Ten Commandments: The Decalogue, Christianity, and the Beast*.

And furthermore, consider that in the post-millennial kingdom of God, the Bible teaches:

¹ Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea. ² Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. ³ And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God. ⁴ And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away."

⁵ Then He who sat on the throne said, "Behold, I make all things new." And He said to me, "Write, for these words are true and faithful."

⁶ And He said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts. ⁷ He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son. (Revelation 21:1-7)

The excellence and beauty of God's loving plan is something to meditate upon. But let's continue in the chapter:

⁸ But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death." (Revelation 21:8)

Do not be cowardly. The word of God gives hope.

Satan told Eve to doubt God (Genesis 3:2-5). Satan wants you to doubt God. The Bible calls Satan:

² ... the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, (Ephesians 2:2)

Satan wants to get to your mind.

Don't think wrongly that you cannot make it into God's Kingdom or that God will give up on you.

As the Apostle Paul was inspired to write:

⁶ being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ; (Philippians 1:6)

And as Jesus said:

²² And you will be hated by all for My name's sake. But he who endures to the end will be saved. (Matthew 10:22)

Try not to be discouraged with the tests and trials you face. As a Christian, yes, you can be confident that if you do not give up on God then God will not give up on you!

6. Men and Women Are Different and Often Think Differently

In the Book of Genesis we read:

¹⁸ And the Lord God said, "It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him." (Genesis 2:18)

Men and women are to be comparable, complementary, helpers of each other. But they are different (cf. 1 Peter 3:7).

When it comes to thinking and meditation, some aspects may be easier meditation for men and some aspects for women as men can often focus better, while women focus in a different way.

Why?

Well, in addition to differing life experiences, physiologically speaking, there are differences in the construction of male and female brains.

Scientists have observed:

Sex differences in human behavior show adaptive complementarity: Males have better motor and spatial abilities, whereas females have superior memory and social cognition skills. ... Male brains during development are structured to facilitate within-lobe and within-hemisphere connectivity, with networks that are transitive, modular, and discrete, whereas female brains have greater interhemispheric connectivity and greater cross-hemispheric participation. (Ingahlalikar M, et al. Sex differences in the structural connectome of the human brain. Proc Natl Acad Sci U S A. 2014 Jan 14; 111(2): 823-828)

Yes, God made males and females to be complimentary towards each other.

Since females have more connections between both halves of their brains, they can handle certain responsibilities better than males. And male focus helps them handle certain responsibilities better.

Related to women, sometimes the excessive preoccupation with social matters can be a problem as Jesus point out:

³⁸ Now it happened as they went that He entered a certain village; and a certain woman named Martha welcomed Him into her house. ³⁹ And she had a sister called Mary, who also sat at Jesus' feet and heard His word. ⁴⁰ But Martha was distracted with much serving, and she approached Him and said, "Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Therefore tell her to help me."

⁴¹ And Jesus answered and said to her, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and troubled about many things. ⁴² But one thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her." (Luke 10:38-42)

Notice that Martha's mind was preoccupied with matters that were not as important as what Jesus was teaching. On the other hand, Mary was a woman who had her mind set to think upon the more important matters.

Related to men and their focus, Jesus told the following parable:

¹⁴ "For the kingdom of heaven is like a man traveling to a far country, who called his own servants and delivered his goods to them. ¹⁵ And to one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one, to each according to his own ability; and immediately he went on a journey. ¹⁶ Then he who had received the five talents went and traded with them, and made another five talents. ¹⁷ And likewise he who had received two gained two more also. ¹⁸ But he who had received one went and dug in the ground, and hid his lord's money. ¹⁹ After a long time the lord of those servants came and settled accounts with them.

²⁰ "So he who had received five talents came and brought five other talents, saying, 'Lord, you delivered to me five talents; look, I have gained five more talents besides them.' ²¹ His lord said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.' ²² He also who had received two talents came and said, 'Lord, you delivered to me two talents; look, I have gained two more talents besides them.' ²³ His lord said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.'

²⁴ "Then he who had received the one talent came and said, 'Lord, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you have not sown, and gathering where you have not scattered seed. ²⁵ And I was afraid, and went and hid your talent in the ground. Look, there you have what is yours.'

²⁶ "But his lord answered and said to him, 'You wicked and lazy servant, you knew that I reap where I have not sown, and gather where I have not scattered seed. ²⁷ So you ought to have deposited my money with the bankers, and at my coming I would have received back my own with interest. ²⁸ So take the talent from him, and give it to him who has ten talents.'

²⁹ 'For to everyone who has, more will be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away.'

³⁰ And cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.' (Matthew 25:14-30)

Yes, males can be wrongly focused – and even some that are called can be unprofitable servants because of fear and inaction. Jesus warned about one, but also that some men had the right focus on the work – and He also showed women can have the right focus (Luke 10:42).

So we see, despite differences between male and female brains, Jesus pointed out that though there can be problems, both males and females can have the right focus. You may also wish to meditate on that.

7. Some Meditation-Related Comments from the old Radio/Worldwide Church of God

Related to meditation and the Sabbath, the old Radio Church of God published the following:

The Sabbath is GOD'S Day-the day He made HOLY! It is not only a day of physical REST and relaxation from the toil of the week, but it is also a SPIRITUAL BLESSING-time we can and should spend drawing CLOSE to God, spending extra time in prayer, Bible study, meditation, and spiritual fellowship! It is a day of WORSHIP! (Bioengineering WF. The Joyful BLESSING of God's Holy SABBATH! Good News, September 1964)

The Sabbath is a great time to meditate on God's ways and His creation.

Prayer, fasting, meditation, and Bible study have long been promoted by the Church of God. The old WCG published:

Fast often. When using any tool, physical or spiritual, practice makes perfect. ...

Don't just fill the time with everything else but study, meditation and prayer. Remember why you decided to set the time aside – for God to use in teaching you and for you to use in drawing closer to Him. A fast is not a form of penance or an endurance test. It is a time for spiritual renewal.

Pastor General Herbert W. Armstrong writes in his autobiography of dividing time spent fasting into three segments – study, meditation and prayer. (Millman RJ. The Way to Spiritual Growth - Fast Good News Magazine May 1984)

When you fast is a good time to also meditate. Now that does not mean that ALL you can do when you fast is to pray, study the Bible, and meditate, but that those should be elements of your fast.

Regarding Herbert Armstrong, note that while fasting:

During the meditation period, Mr. Armstrong will sometimes take an invigorating walk - preferably in an area where he can be near to God's creation. (Lesson 48--WHY CHRISTIANS SHOULD FAST TODAY. Ambassador College Bible Correspondence Course, 1967)

Notice something relating to hallowing God's name:

Q. ... Would thanking God for blessings He has given you be another way to hallow His name?

A. Yes! The more you meditate on God's goodness, the more you will want to personally glorify Him in your life. (Lesson 46--Test. Ambassador College Bible Correspondence Course, 1967)

Here is a list of meditation scriptures in a 1976 article in the old Worldwide Church of God:

MEDITATION IN THE BIBLE ...

Meditation, biblically defined, is not an attempt to produce an "altered state of consciousness." Rather it is an active mental exercise — a pondering or thinking on God's ways, His laws, His greatness, and one's relationship to Him. Following are some examples of this type of meditation.

Psalm 1:1-2. "Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; but his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night. "

Psalm 63:5-6. "My soul is feasted as with marrow and fat, and my mouth praises thee with joyful lips, when I think of thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee in the watches of the night."

Psalm 77:11-12. " I will call to mind the deeds of the Lord; yea, I will remember thy wonders of old. I will meditate on all thy work, and muse on thy mighty deeds. "

Psalm 119:15. " I will meditate on thy precepts, and fix my eyes on thy ways."

Psalm 119:23. "Even though princes sit plotting against me, thy servant will meditate on thy statutes.',

Psalm 119:48, 59. "I revere thy commandments. which I love, and I will meditate on thy statutes When I think of thy ways, I turn my feet to thy testimonies."

Psalm 119:78. "Let the godless be put to shame, because they have subverted me with guile; as for me, I will meditate on thy precepts."

Psalm 119:97, 99. "Oh, how I love thy law! It is my meditation all the day.... I have more understanding than all my teachers, for thy testimonies are my meditation."

Psalm 139:17. "How precious to me are thy thoughts, O God! How vast is the sum of them! If I would count them, they are more than the sand."

Psalm 143:5. "I remember the days of old, I meditate on all that thou hast done; I muse on what thy hands have wrought."

I Timothy 4:13-15. "Till I come, attend to the public reading of scripture, to preaching, to teaching. Do not neglect the gift you have, which was given you by prophetic utterance when the elders laid their hands upon you. Practice [KJV: "meditate

upon"] these duties, devote yourself to them, so that all may see your progress." (Graunke PD. Meditation and Mantras - Paradise Regained? Good News, December 1976)

Herbert Armstrong used to say that the easiest way to get air out of a glass was to put something else (like water) in it. Jesus warned that an empty mind was something that cast out demons would like to return to (Matthew 12:43-45).

One of the best ways to keep wrong and demonic thoughts out of your mind is to have your mind filled with the things of God, which meditation can help you do.

The old Worldwide Church of God taught the following in an article titled *Meditation - What Is Its Role In Your Life?*:

Meditation is, on the mental level, what digestion of food is on the physical level. If we eat "junk" food, that's what we digest – that's what we become. If we eat good food, we have good food to digest and to become part of us. In order to be able to meditate on God and His ways, we must "eat" His Word – a lot of it – and often. How is it possible throughout the day to "be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour" (II Pet. 3:2) if we don't assimilate and drink them in in the first place? It is not possible. The Bible gives many subjects of meditation, such as: The works of God's hands, His creation (Ps. 8:3, 143:5). (This is an especially appropriate subject whenever you do find a scenic view" or when you observe some amazing thing in nature.) God's past works in your life (Ps. 77:5-6, 10-12). His strength (Isa. 17:10). His covenant with His people and with you personally (I Chron. 16:15). Your Christian calling and duties (I Tim. 4:13-15). Our High Priest, Jesus Christ (Heb. 3:1). God's statutes and laws (Ps. 119:48). His wonders (Neh. 9:17). Can't think of anything to meditate about? This is enough to keep you awake all night!

Positive results

Meditating brings positive results. Researchers have compiled reports about people in the world who spend a few minutes each day “meditating.” By “meditating” they mean only brief periods of relaxing, withdrawing from involvements and pursuits and getting reoriented. Even for these halfway measures, the reports indicate a lessening of stress, blood pressure and oxygen consumption and purport a wide range of beneficial changes in health, personality, intelligence and performance. Meditating on God's way produces any positive results the world's way of meditation can produce, plus a whole lot more! It brings life – eternal life (Rom. 8:6), great blessings (Ps. 1), prosperity and success (Josh. 1:8), gladness (Ps. 104:34), hope (Lam. 3:19-24, RSV), wisdom and understanding (Ps. 119:98-99), endurance and perseverance (Heb. 12:3), strength in the face of persecution (Ps. 119:23-24). Keeping your mind filled with the goal God has set before you will prevent you from slipping back into the world you came out of (Heb. 11:15-16). Isaiah summed up the whole subject of meditation when he exclaimed to God, “Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee (Isa. 26:3). (Steep C. Meditation - What Is Its Role In Your Life? Good News, April 1981)

Let's look at a more modern translation of Isaiah 26:3 and add verse 4:

³ You will keep him in perfect peace,
Whose mind is stayed on You,
Because he trusts in You.

⁴ Trust in the Lord forever,
For in Yah, the Lord, is everlasting strength. (Isaiah 26:3-4)

Yes, your mind and thoughts when you meditate should be towards that of the ways and truth of the real God.

8. Concluding Comments

The Bible endorses meditating on God and His word, but not on pagan ideas.

As Christians, we can let our light shine (Matthew 5:16) to show that we love God and others. Your light can shine better with proper meditation.

In the December 1984 edition of its *Good News* magazine, WCG had the following:

Are you proving your love for God by the way you live your life? Does God see you building strong, caring relationships with others? ...

When you express your appreciation to another person, you are giving something very important. Make sure you are not carelessly withholding it (Proverbs 12:25, 16:24). Notice Hebrews 10:24-25: "Let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching." ...

Study Philippians 4:8, where Paul actually lists for us what we should have on our minds: "Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy - meditate on these things." Pay special attention to the phrase "if there is anything praiseworthy - meditate on these things." Doing this would surely help us be more aware of others, wouldn't it? (Kirk J. THE POWER OF APPRECIATION. *Good News*, December 1984)

Yes, developing more love for God and others, is part of purpose of meditating.

What will you gain by meditating on God and His ways?

As mentioned before, it will help you be a real success as well as being wiser.

You will better understand the loving reality of the coming kingdom of God.

Furthermore, you will better be able to comply with something that the Apostle Peter was inspired to write:

¹⁸ ... grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. (2 Peter 3:18)

As you meditate on God, His word, His commandments, and His ways, you should be able to better understand why God's ways are best and how they lead to the increasing of love in the universe.

Love is what life is all about and better understanding God's ways of love will help you to love better.

That, in turn, will result in your eternity being better, as well as the eternity of others you will be able to give love to. And they in turn will make your eternity better as well.

Meditation is one of the tools that the Bible recommends for God's faithful people.

Continuing Church of God

The USA office of the *Continuing Church of God* is located at: 1036 W. Grand Avenue, Grover Beach, California, 93433 USA. We have supporters all around the world, and in all inhabited continents (all continents, except Antarctica).

Continuing Church of God Website Information

CCOG.ORG The main website for the *Continuing Church of God*, with links to literature in 100 languages.

CCOG.ASIA Asian-focused website, with multiple Asian languages.

CCOG.IN India-focused website, with some Indian languages.

CCOG.EU European-focused website, with multiple European languages.

CCOG.NZ Website targeted towards New Zealand.

CCOGAFRICA.ORG Website targeted towards Africa.

CCOGCANADA.CA Website targeted towards Canada.

CDLIDD.ES This is a totally Spanish language website.

PNIND.PH Philippines-focused website, with some Tagalog.

Radio & YouTube Video Channels

BIBLENEWSPROPHECY.NET Bible News Prophecy online radio.

Bible News Prophecy channel. Sermonettes on YouTube, BitChute, Brighteon, & Rumble.

CCOGAfrica channel. YouTube and BitChute video messages from Africa.

CCOG Animations Animated messages on YouTube BitChute.

ContinuingCOG & COGTube. Sermons on YouTube and BitChute respectively.

News and History Websites

CHURCHHISTORYBOOK.COM Church history website.

COGWRITER.COM News, history, and prophecy website.