

Keeping fresh in personal devotion

How can we know blessing in our life of personal devotion?

Psalm 1 ESVUK

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;
²but his delight is in the law of the LORD,
and on his law he meditates day and night.
³He is like a tree
planted by streams of water
that yields its fruit in its season,
and its leaf does not wither.
In all that he does, he prospers.
⁴The wicked are not so,
but are like chaff that the wind drives away.
⁵Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgement,
nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous;
⁶for the LORD knows the way of the righteous,
but the way of the wicked will perish.

The way of the blessed

Their root (v1–2)

Their fruit (v3)

Their end (v1, 5–6)

The way of the wicked

Their root (v1)

Their fruit (v4)

Their end (v5–6)

God will bless those who continually meditate on and delight in his word.

For consideration

Where we are rooted is critical!

Do we believe we can find delight in God's word?

Meditation is key—'Meditation is the activity of calling to mind, and thinking over, and dwelling on, and applying to oneself, the various things one knows about the works and ways and purposes and promises of God. It is an activity of holy thought, consciously performed in the presence of God, under the eye of God, by the help of God, as a means of communion with God. Its purpose is to clear one's mental and spiritual vision of God, and to **let His truth make its full and proper impact on one's mind and heart.**'] I Packer

Which way will we choose?

For discussion:

1. What path to blessing does the Psalm presents to us?
2. What are the challenges as a leader to meditating on and delighting in the Word of God?

Some suggestions

- Try different things
- A fixed daily time
- Using the book we're teaching in IGG/RML/CF...?
- Meditating on sermons
- Reading through a book of the Bible
- Using Bible reading notes—including 'seasonal' ones
- Start with a psalm
- PrayerMate app
- Aeroplane mode?
- Prayers written by others... or ourselves
- Devotional times with others
- The piece of paper... or note on your phone
- Christian songs
- Praying while cycling/driving/walking
- Different seasons of life
- etc etc etc!

For discussion:

1. Think about your current practice in personal devotion. In what ways does it help you meditate on and find delight in God's word? In what ways is it lacking? What changes would you like to make?
2. Is there anything you've heard today that you'd like to try? Any further suggestions to share?

Resources:

Explore Bible reading notes, The Good Book Company

True Devotion, Allan Chapple (all excellent, but particularly note chapter 11 '*The Missing Link*' on meditation)

Repeat the Sounding Joy, Christopher Ash

The Glory of the Cross, Tim Chester

The Valley of Vision—A Collection of Puritan Prayers and Devotions, ed. Arthur Bennett.

eg: <https://banneroftruth.org/uk/devotional/a-ministers-prayer/> (A Minister's Prayer)