

3-STEP BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO BIBLICAL MEDITATION

Understand and practice the skill of Biblical meditation

WHAT TO EXPECT

- Improved Biblical behaviors ✓
- Clarity on what Biblical Meditation is ✓
- Repetitions of the skill for your practice ✓
- Simple steps for understanding Biblical meditation ✓

IMPROVED BEHAVIORS

- ~~Believing lies about God~~ ✗
- ~~Habitual sins~~ ✗
- Believe the truth about God ✓
- Bearing the fruit of the Spirit ✓



A 3-Step Beginner's Guide to Biblical Meditation

Objective:

The purpose of this document is to help you understand, practice, and build the skill of Biblical meditation. "Biblical meditation is the process of focusing your mind on Biblical ideas that will lead to wisdom, abundance, and life"¹. With a good foundation in Biblical meditation, you will be able to improve this skill with constant repetition.

Process:

Biblical Meditation uses the tool of focused repetition to reveal and clarify God's nature, character, and behavior, as well as how humans relate to God and other people. We use the 3-R acronym of

- Read
- Recognize
- Reread

We **READ** a passage of scripture, **RECOGNIZE** certain features of that passage, and then **REREAD** either the passage we just read or the passage it references.

If you are reciting a passage from memory, the words Read and Reread can be exchanged for the word **RECITE**. Thus, the 3-R acronym can be transformed into

- Recite
- Recognize
- Recite

Payoff:

When we meditate on different Bible passages, we are given a wonderful opportunity to understand God better. God is the source, sustainer, and goal of all reality. All life starts with him, he sustains all life, and everything eventually returns to him. If you misunderstand God, you will misunderstand why you are alive, how to live, and what happens after you die. When you understand God better, you can understand, with exceptional clarity, why you are alive, how you should live, and what happens after you die.

This clarity about God will produce a life well lived. Your relationship with God, others, and yourself will improve.

Practicing this skill will allow you to remove negative behaviors such as:

- Habitual sins
- Believing lies about God
- Believing lies about sin
- Believing lies about yourself



Practicing this skill will allow you to implement or improve positive behaviors such as:

- Habitual obedience to God
- Bearing the fruit of the Spirit
- Believe the truth about God
- Believe the truth about sin
- Believe the truth about yourself

Additional Note:

This skill is for people who are somewhat familiar with the Bible. If you have never read the Bible, you won't know which passages are being referenced, and you won't have anything to "reread." You don't have to read the whole Bible first, but getting a few books under your belt would be helpful.

Additional Resources:

- Many quotes in the document were taken from the Bible project podcast
 - <https://bibleproject.com/podcast/literature-lifetime/>
 - 1 - Bible Project Tim Mackie and John Collins. "Literature for a Lifetime." October 18, 2021, 55:10
 - 2 - Bible Project Tim Mackie and John Collins. "Literature for a Lifetime." October 18, 2021, 55:10
 - <https://bibleproject.com/podcast/how-read-bible-part-5-why-isnt-there-more-detail-bible-stories>
 - 3 - Bible Project Tim Mackie and John Collins. "Why Isn't More Detail in Bible Stories?" August 4, 2017, 44:25
 - <https://bibleproject.com/podcast/how-read-bible-part-6-jewish-scripture-meditation-vs-modern-meditation/>
- If you need additional help, refer to our Biblical meditation skill-building videos on YouTube: ____
- Download my answers from the website ____
- Remember to pray and ask God to help you with this skill.



Biblical Meditation Background Knowledge

Biblical meditation is the process of focusing your mind on Biblical ideas that will lead to wisdom, abundance, and life.

“The Bible is ancient Jewish literature that is artistically designed to interpret itself and encourage a lifetime of re-reading and reflection”². Tim Mackie calls this Jewish meditation literature.

The Hebrew word for the English word meditate is Haga, which has the connotation of a bear growling lowly while eating his food³. The idea is to ponder on a passage of scripture while murmuring it quietly. In other words, Biblical meditation focuses your mind on Biblical ideas. You ponder the passage while reading it softly. Bible passages that speak about the concept of meditation are:

Deuteronomy 17:14-15;18-20

14 When you enter the land the Lord your God is giving you and have taken possession of it and settled in it, and you say, “Let us set a king over us like all the nations around us,” **15** be sure to appoint over you a king the Lord your God chooses...

18 When he takes the throne of his kingdom, he is to write for himself on a scroll a copy of this law, taken from that of the Levitical priests. **19** It is to be with him, and he is to read it all the days of his life so that he may learn to revere the Lord his God and follow carefully all the words of this law and these decrees **20** and not consider himself better than his fellow Israelites and turn from the law to the right or to the left. Then he and his descendants will reign a long time over his kingdom in Israel.

Joshua 1:7-8

7 “Be strong and very courageous. Be careful to obey all the law my servant Moses gave you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, that you may be successful wherever you go. **8** Keep this Book of the Law always on your lips; 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.

Psalms 1:1-3

1 Blessed is the one
who does not walk in step with the wicked
or stand in the way that sinners take
or sit in the company of mockers,
2 but whose delight is in the law of the Lord,
and who meditates on his law day and night.
3 That person is like a tree planted by streams of water,
which yields its fruit in season
and whose leaf does not wither—
whatever they do prospers.

Psalms 119:11

11 I have hidden your word in my heart
that I might not sin against you.



Biblical Meditation uses the tool of focused repetition to reveal and clarify God's nature, character, and behavior, as well as how humans relate to God and other people. We use the 3-R acronym of

- **Read**
- **Recognize**
- **Reread**

1. **Read** = Choose a passage from the Bible to read. It could be as small as a verse and as big as a few chapters.
 - a. Remember the low growl of the bear. It helps to say what you are reading
 - b. Always remember the context of the passage you are reading
2. **Recognize** = As you are reading, pay special attention to certain features of the passage.
 - a. Pay attention to words, phrases, and themes you have seen in other Bible passages. Write the reference down if known.
 - b. Pay attention to "Holy Spirit Highlights", things that are really sticking out to you
 - i. I often pray about what the Holy Spirit highlighted
 - c. It's ok not to recognize anything
3. **Reread** = Choose a passage from the Bible to read again.
 - a. Reread the current passage, or
 - b. Reread the passage that the current passage is referencing
 - i. Obtain understanding from the passages by comparing and contrasting each passage
 - ii. If you reread the same passage, gain understanding by paying attention to any additional Holy Spirit Highlights

Again, you can exchange the words READ and REREAD for RECITE.

1. **Recite** = Choose a passage from the Bible to recite. It could be as small as a verse and as big as a few chapters.
 - a. Always remember the context of the passage you are reciting
2. **Recognize** = As you are reciting, pay special attention to certain features of the passage.
 - a. Pay attention to words, phrases, and themes you have seen in other Bible passages.
 - b. Pay attention to "Holy Spirit Highlights", things that are really sticking out to you
 - i. I often pray about what the Holy Spirit highlighted
 - c. It's ok not to recognize anything
3. **Recite** = Choose a passage from the Bible to recite again.
 - a. Recite the current passage, or
 - b. Reread or recite the passage that the current passage was referencing
 - i. It can be helpful to recite a passage a certain number of times or for a specific time limit (i.e., recite a passage 15 times or for 3 minutes)
 - ii. Obtain understanding from the passages by comparing and contrasting each passage
 - iii. If you recite the same passage, gain understanding by paying attention to any additional Holy Spirit Highlights



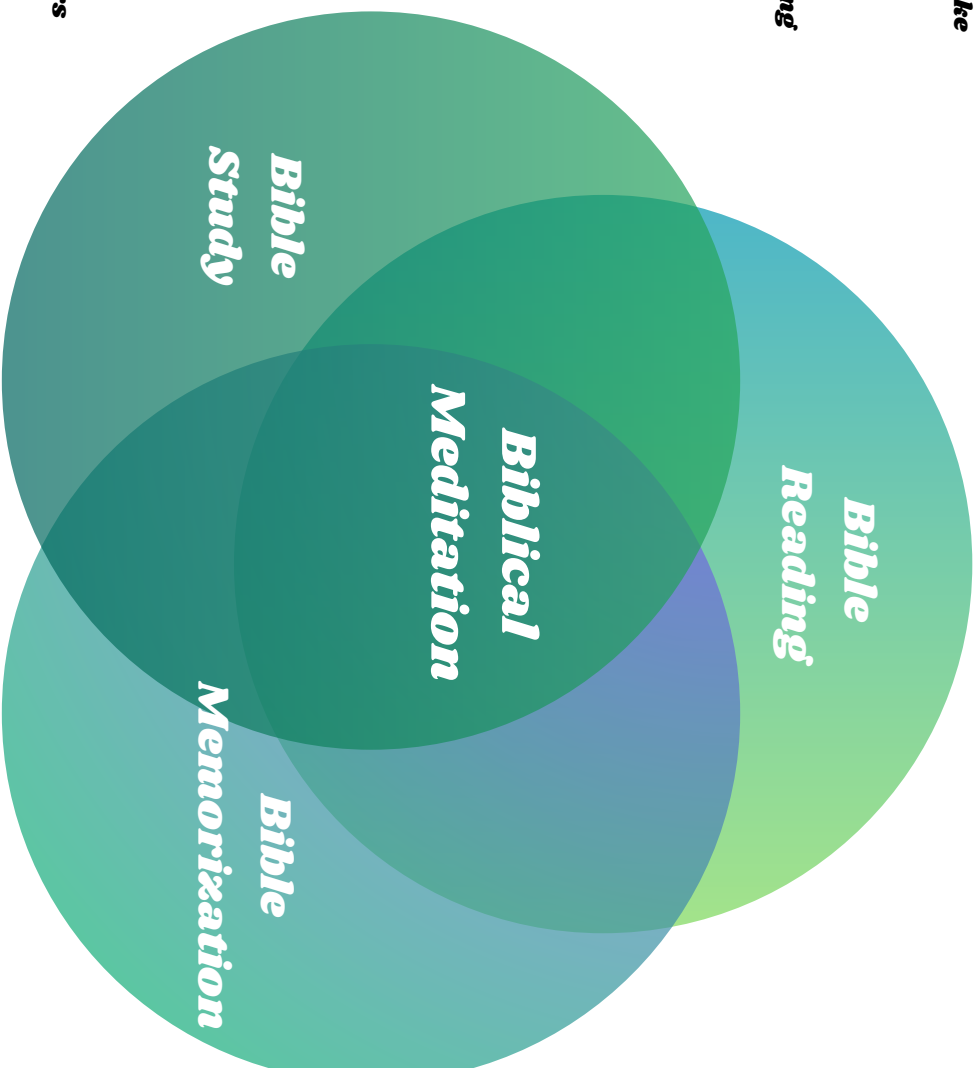
Different Bible Reading and Bible Study Tools

Characteristics of

Bible Reading

- *The goal is to read just to make it through a passage.*
- *Reading for familiarization*
- *Reading to gain an understanding*
- *This is often seen with reading plans*

Bible Study Tools



Characteristics of

Bible Study

- *The goal of Bible Study is a deeper understanding of the Bible through meticulous investigation*
- *Looking for a deeper understanding*
- *Looking through many layers of text*
- *Looking for solutions to questions*
- *Bible Study often happens over many "sessions."*

Characteristics of

Bible Memorization

- *The goal of Bible Memorization is to memorize a passage of the Bible*
- *Read and reread until the verse or passage is memorized*
- *The goal is to memorize*
- *Through memorization, you hide God's word in your heart*

Characteristics of

Biblical Meditation

- *The goal of Biblical Meditation is the repetition of a passage of scripture*
- *You observe different layers of texts as you recite and reread*
- *Repetition in reading gives you a different understanding than simply reading for understanding*
- *Repetitive reading also hides God's word in your heart*



Biblical Meditation Rep #1

Read:

Read 1 Samuel 1 once

Recognize:

1. What are some words, phrases, or themes you read that you have seen in other Bible passages? Write down the reference to these other passages if known.

2. Did the Holy Spirit highlight anything to you? If so, what?

Reread:

1. Pick a passage referenced by 1 Samuel to reread, or reread 1 Samuel.
2. After reading another passage, what are some similarities and differences between the passages? (If applicable)

1 Samuel 1	Referenced Passage

3. What can we learn from the similarities and differences? (If applicable)

4. What did you learn from rereading the same passage? (If applicable)



Biblical Meditation Rep #2

Read:

Read 1 Kings 12:25-33 once

Recognize:

1. What are some words, phrases, or themes you read that you have seen in other Bible passages? Write down the reference to these other passages if known.

2. Did the Holy Spirit highlight anything to you? If so, what?

Reread:

1. Pick a passage referenced by 1 Kings 12:25-33 reread, or reread 1 Kings 12:25-33.
2. After reading another passage, what are some similarities and differences between the passages? (If applicable)

1 Kings 12:25-33	Referenced Passage

3. What can we learn from the similarities and differences? (If applicable)

4. What did you learn from rereading the same passage? (If applicable)



Biblical Meditation Rep #3

Read:

Read Psalms 23 once

Recognize:

1. What are some words, phrases, or themes you read that you have seen in other Bible passages? Write down the reference to these other passages if known.

2. Did the Holy Spirit highlight anything to you? If so, what?

Reread:

1. Pick a passage referenced by Psalms 23 reread, or reread Psalms 23.
2. After reading another passage, what are some similarities and differences between the passages? (If applicable)

Psalms 23	Referenced Passage

3. What can we learn from the similarities and differences? (If applicable)

4. What did you learn from rereading the same passage? (If applicable)



Biblical Meditation Rep #4

Read:

Read 1 John 4:18 once

Recognize:

1. What are some words, phrases, or themes you read that you have seen in other Bible passages? Write down the reference to these other passages if known.

2. Did the Holy Spirit highlight anything to you? If so, what?

Reread:

1. Pick a passage referenced by 1 John 4:18 reread, or reread 1 John 4:18.
2. After reading another passage, what are some similarities and differences between the passages? (If applicable)

1 John 4:18	Referenced Passage

3. What can we learn from the similarities and differences? (If applicable)

4. What did you learn from rereading the same passage? (If applicable)



Biblical Meditation Rep #5

Recite:

Recite Psalms 19:14 once

Recognize:

1. What are some words, phrases, or themes you read that you have seen in other Bible passages? Write down the reference to these other passages if known.

2. Did the Holy Spirit highlight anything to you? If so, what?

Recite:

1. Recite Psalms 19:14 **ten** more times.
2. What did you learn from reciting the same passage?



Biblical Meditation Rep #6

Read:

Pick a passage of your choice to read

Recognize:

1. What are some words, phrases, or themes you read that you have seen in other Bible passages? Write down the reference to these other passages if known.

2. Did the Holy Spirit highlight anything to you? If so, what?

Reread:

1. Pick a passage referenced by the passage you chose to reread or reread the current passage.
2. After reading another passage, what are some similarities and differences between the passages? (If applicable)

Your Passage	Referenced Passage

3. What can we learn from the similarities and differences? (If applicable)

4. What did you learn from rereading the same passage? (If applicable)

