

## MEDITATION

Imagination exerts amazing power! Many of us struggle with obsessive thoughts. Our imaginations are haunted by images of doing the things we crave. No matter how hard we try to exert willpower over our imaginations, our willpower loses the battle sooner or later. Instead of trying to summon up more willpower, perhaps we should try a different tactic.

In the Bible God told Joshua (and us) to ***“obey all the laws Moses gave you. Do not turn away from them, and you will be successful in everything you do. Study the Book of the Law continually. Meditate on it day and night so you may be sure to obey all that is written in it. Only then will you succeed”*** (Joshua 1:7-8). The world thinks that prosperity and success come from having power and a desire to get ahead. God says that to succeed we must read and study His Word.

When the psalmist described the person who was not caught up in evil, he said, ***“He...is always meditating on His laws and thinking about ways to follow Him more closely. Whatever he does prospers”*** (Psalm 1:2). Again, we see that prosperity comes from meditating on and following God’s Word.

Look at these verses from Psalm 119 and the promises given for the person who reads and meditates on God’s Word.

***“How can a young person stay pure? By living according to Your Word”*** (v9).

We can’t stay pure by ourselves. The tempting influences around us are too strong. We need the strength and wisdom found by reading the Bible and doing what it says.

***“I have hidden your Word in my heart, that I might not sin against You”*** (v11).

God’s laws were given to free us to be all that He wants us to be. They restrict us from doing what might cripple us. God’s guidance helps us avoid paths that lead to destruction and prevent us from being our best.

Consider also these verses.

***“Your decrees...give me wise advice”*** (v24).

***“Make me walk along the path of your commands, for that is where my happiness is found”*** (v35).

***“I meditate on Your age-old laws; O Lord, they comfort me”*** (v52).

***“I will never forget Your commandments, for You have used them to restore my joy and health”*** (v93).

***“Your commands make me wiser than my enemies”*** (v98).

***“Your Word is my only source of hope”*** (v114).

***“Those who love Your law have great peace and do not stumble”*** (v165).

Meditating means spending time reading and thinking about what you have read. It means asking yourself how you should change so you are living as God wants. If you want to follow God more closely, you must know what He says.

The more we commit ourselves to knowing God’s will through study of His Word, the better prepared we are to help ourselves in the process of recovery and in life.

The battle over obsessive thoughts is not won by willpower but by filling our imaginations with images of a life lived according to God’s plan. God tells us to ***“fix our thoughts on what is true and honorable and right. Think about things that are pure and lovely and admirable. Think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise”*** (Phil. 1:8).

Meditating on God’s Word is invaluable for recovery and for life. Let us be able to say with the psalmist: ***“Your law is more valuable to me than millions in gold and silver! You made me; you created me. Now give me the sense to follow Your commands”*** (Ps. 119: 72-73).