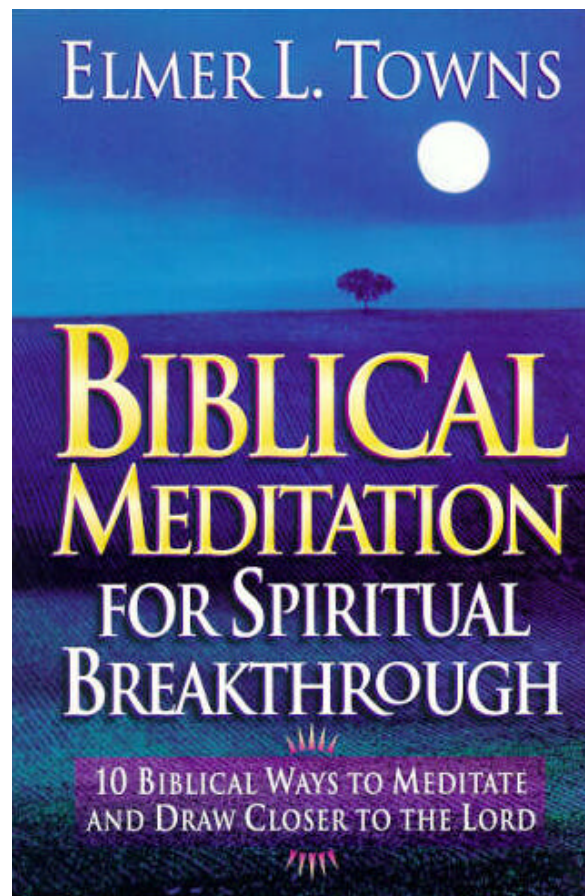




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8 THE HAGGAI MODEL: CONSIDERING YOUR FAILURES

Haggai uses the word "consider" over and over to remind us to consider our failures so we can learn how to overcome them.

9 ASAPH MODEL: MEDITATING ON GOD'S INTERVENTION

Twelve Psalms written by Asaph reflect his fears and frustrations and how he meditated on God's intervention.

10 THE MALACHI MODEL: MEDITATION ON GOD'S NAMES

Malachi reminds us that God gets worship when we meditate on His name and He keeps written records of those who do.

11 THE KORAH FACTOR: CONTEMPLATING INTIMACY WITH GOD

Twelve Psalms tell us to meditate on God to become intimate with Him.

EPILOGUE

APPENDIX

A MEDITATION THAT IS NOT CHRISTIAN

A survey of the different kinds of meditation with a Christian evaluation.

B WHAT CHRISTIAN LEADERS SAY ABOUT MEDITATION

Quotations from great Christian leaders about meditation.

C A TOPICAL INDEX OF SCRIPTURES ON MEDITATION

A comprehensive printing of Scriptures dealing with meditation for comparison and study.

Chapter One
THE LOST ART OF MEDITATION

A young boy sat frequently on the front porch of his home in a small New England town gazing at the large white rock on the other side of the valley. There was a man's face in the rock called "Old Stone Face." The Indians had a legend that the white rock was the face of a man who would come to the valley, bringing prosperity to all. The young boy studied every portion of the rock, looking for the eyes . . . the nose . . . the facial appearance. He thought,

"I want to be the first to recognize the man who will bring prosperity to my valley."

A salesman came into the valley, going door to door, selling a kitchen utensil to the ladies. The boy was sure he was the white face that would bring prosperity. He ran to town yelling,

"The man in the great stone face is here!"

But the salesman's gimmick didn't work. When the boy was proven wrong, he went back to study deeply the face in the rock.

A doctor came selling a miracle cure. This time the boy was sure this was "Stone Face" when he heard someone was healed by his medicine. He ran through town yelling,

"The man in the great stone face is here!"

Again the boy was wrong. There were no healings, and the doctor was a fraud, he was selling "snake oil." Again he studied old stone face.

The boy grew into young manhood without discovering the man in the great stone face. He went to college where he was converted to Christ. He went through seminary to prepare for the ministry. God put it upon his heart to return to his boyhood New England town to preach the gospel.

As he entered the town, he greeted the first lady he met, but she didn't speak. She just stared. The young minister thought,

"She must be against preachers coming to her town."

When he went into a store, the clerk didn't wait on him, the clerk only stared at the young preacher. Everyone stared at the minister because he looked identical to the man face in the great white rock. He had become the great stone face and the Indian myth came true, he brought prosperity to the town—spiritual prosperity.

We become like,
the thing we constantly
think about.

The boy in the story becomes like the "stone face," probably not in physical characteristics, but in inner spirit. The Bible calls this meditation. The word meditate is found fourteen times in Scripture. Why should He be concerned about what we think or meditate?

"For as a man thinketh in his heart, so is he" - Proverbs 23:7(KJV)

Meditation is one of the Christian's discipline, but like so many things in Christianity, the world or false religions are attempting to steal it. They take Christian actions like prayer and fasting and fill them with non-Christian practices and anti-Christian goals. While writing this

book, I saw an article on meditation in a woman's magazine at the checkout register at the grocery store. The article had nothing to do with Christianity. It was teaching modern women to gain inner peace through yoga.

There are many forces that compete for your mind. Television is compelling, the average American watches over 25 hours a week. Newspapers and magazines are available everywhere. Our thoughts should be our own when we drive, but there are radios, cassettes, advertisement and distractions. It's almost impossible for those whose house is located on the super information highway of life to get a private thought.

Some are rebelling against the data crazed society, they retreat into Yoga, transcendental meditation, or some other form of contemplation (See Appendix A). People assume the lotus position, point their fingers upward and repeat a mantra in meditation. They seek Nirvana . . . to be like God. Shirley McClain says she is God.

New Age seminars are available in large cities, and bookstores in malls carry sections on New Age and Eastern religions. I watched a teenage girl at a Walden's Bookstore in a mall in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, pick up a New Age title and thumb aimlessly through the pages. It was a book on contemplation. I was curious and I asked what she was looking for.

"I want some power over my friends," she answered.

When I tried to tell her I was a Christian, she was not interested in my answers.

"I want to make them do what I tell them to do."

People are curious about meditation for many reasons and that's all right when they sincerely search for answers, and search in the right places. This book has some answers, it has biblical answers. The Bible teaches there are at least ten different biblical ways to meditate. Each way to meditate is different because there are at least ten different types of meditation and at least ten different results.

More Than One Way To Meditate
a time to think quietly about God the Creator
a time to think practically about God the Problem-solver
a time to examine your principles
a time to look without at the world in wonder
a time to look at the past and remember
a time to look to the future and plan
a time to face our failures and do better
a time to examine your success and go on

I began telling a friend that I was writing a book on meditation. He scowled. I could see disapproval in his face, so I confronted him wanting to know why he frowned.

"Meditation sounds mushy to me," he replied.

He thought meditation was something done by a medieval monk in a monastery—sitting in a cell all day—contemplating God. Then he added, "Meditation is what kids do at camp when they sit and watch the sun go down over the lake."

"Wrong!" I smiled at him.

Then to make sure I didn't alienate him, I explained that sometimes meditation was passive meditation, but at other times it produced active problem-solving or meditation motivating

you to make making positive plans for the future. The Bible uses many other terms to describe

1. Remembering
Think on these things
- 3.
4. Behold God's love
Muse on the work of thy hands (Psalm 143:5)
- 6.
7. Consider
Let the mind of Christ be in you
9. r mind on things above
- 10.

Not until you begin to meditate on God and His Word, will you realize how much you've all day long." If you think about food all day long, your life will center If you want to be Meditation helps us gain significant insight into and understanding of truth that may surpass that of 2 Tim. 2:7).

1. Psalm 119:99; II Tim. 2:7)
You get a positive outlook on life (Psalm 104:34)
You deepen your love for
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
7. otivated to ministry (I Timothy 4:15; I Samuel 12:24)
Meditation motivates you to repent and live better (Psalm 39:3; Rev. 2:5)
You find the peace of God (Phil. 4:8, 9)
You get a clear focus to guide you in making decisions (Col. 3:2; Matt.
- 11.
- 12.

Most of us are busy. We talk on the friends. Most people would tell me they have no time to meditate. But if you don't think and life—you'll be led about by the nose—by people who think and plan your life for you.

When To Meditate

Commuting to work
Shaving/applying make-up
Waiting at the copier
In the checkout line
Waiting for a bus/taxi
In bed before going to sleep
Driving time
Before the church service

Everyone meditates differently because their personality is different. Obviously, our mind functions the same as other normal people, but what we think on and what we think is different. The optimistic businessman thinks positive thoughts. There is not a pessimistic thought in his brain. The irresponsible worker who can't keep a job only sees the rain clouds, he never expects the sun.

Henry J. Kaiser, the industrialist, was one time supervising the building of a levy along the riverbank. A storm came through the area, and the riverbank flooded. All his earth-moving machinery was mired in mud and the work was destroyed. When he arrived at the work site, he found his workers sitting in despair.

“What’s wrong?” Kaiser asked his workers. “Let’s get started.”

The workers pointed to all the machinery bogged down in mud. They were discouraged because all they had done was destroyed.

“We can’t work in this mud!” the foreman said to Kaiser.

“What mud?” Kaiser answered, “Look up, I don’t see any mud in the sky. I see the sun.” He explained that soon the sun would dry out the mud. A clear blue sky would be a perfect day in which to work. “Soon the mud will be dry, you’ll be able to move your machinery and we can start over again.”

The way you think is one of the most powerful influences on the way you live. William James said, “The greatest discovery of my generation is that human beings can alter their lives by altering their attitude of mind.” So it is possible to make a success of your failed life. First, you must change your way of thinking. You must get rid of the ideas that made you fail, and fill your mind with new, fresh, creative ways to succeed. Marcus Aurelius said, “A man’s life is what his thoughts make of it.”

This book is about the thoughts of ten different people in the Bible and how they meditated. Since they were in different circumstances, they meditated differently. Also, they faced different problems/issues, so they thought differently. Their occupation or task in life also influenced the way they thought. Read each one carefully, think about what they thought about and the way they meditated. You can learn from some of them, but because of the differences in people, all of them are not for you. Therefore, as you read this book—think carefully on what is said. Meditate deeply—this book can change your life.

The David Model: *Considering God's Creation and might*

The Mary Model: *Pondering the person of Jesus*

The St. John Model: *Thinking about the cross*

The Joshua Model: *Focusing of biblical principles*

The St. Paul Model: *Becoming like Christ*

The Timothy Model: *Meditating on your calling and gifts*

The Haggai Model: *Assessing your failures*

The Asaph Model: *Meditating on God's intervention*

The Malachi Model: *Meditating on God's name*

The Korah Model: *Contemplating intimacy with God*

Ten Ways to Practice Christian Meditation

The David Model is first because this is where the non-Christian first encounters God. David, the young shepherd spent many nights under the stars keeping watch over his father's flock. He learned, "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament shows His handiwork" (Psalm 19:1). Long before people read about God in Scriptures, they can learn about God who reveals Himself through nature. Stars in the night sky were designed as signs (Gen. 1:14) and special significance was attached to the rainbow after the flood (Gen. 9:13). Follow the David Model to meditate on the majesty of God.

The one closest to Jesus on this earth was His mother Mary. "Mary kept all these things and pondered them in her heart" (Luke 2:19). She thought about His supernatural birth, life and death. She wanted to know more about Him, and then she becomes our example to know Christ.

When you follow the St. John Model, you meditate on the cross and Christ's finished work. John was the only one of the twelve disciples to stand at the foot of the cross and see the actual death of Christ. It forever changed his life. He urged his readers to "behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called the children of God!" (I John 3:1). John and those who follow his example see the cross of Christ as a strong motivation to personal holiness (I John 3:3) and a growing sense of Christian community (I John 4:11).

Those who follow the Joshua example, meditate on the principles of Scripture for personal success. "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 1:8). This approach to meditation is key to achieving success in every area of life.

Perhaps the fullest expression of Christian meditation is found in the St. Paul Model, meditating on becoming like Christ. Paul urged the Colossians, "Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth" (Col. 3:2). Some have mistakenly concluded that the St. Paul example of meditation makes one so heavenly minded they can be no earthly good. But Paul's way of thinking worked. He built churches and led people to Christ who grew in grace. Writing the Philippians, he urged, "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" (Phil. 4:8).

The Timothy example in meditation reminds you to consider God's unique calling in your life and the way in which He has gifted you for Christian service. Paul urged Timothy, "Do not neglect the gift that is in you . . . meditate on these things; give yourself entirely to them, that your progress may be

evident to all” (I Tim. 4:14, 15). By reflection on his gifts and calling of God, Timothy could grasp a clear vision of God's mission for his life and have greater ministry effectiveness.

The Haggai Model calls us to look at our problems, failures and sins. Haggai uses the term *consider*, calling the people of his day to “consider your ways” (Haggai 1:5, 7). Haggai motivates us to look at our failures, change our thinking, then change our ways.

Asaph wrote twelve Psalms that praise God for His interventional work in his life. It was a key for his encouragement in difficult and discouraging times. “I will remember the works of the LORD; surely I will remember Your wonders of old. I will also meditate on all Your work, and talk of Your deeds” (Psalm 77:11, 12). The Asaph Model encourages you to record significant answers to prayer so you can remember the unique ways God

The final book of the Old Testament describes the Malachi example of meditation on the names of God. “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 feared the LORD, and who meditate on His name” (Malachi 3:16). In the appendix of my book *The Names of the Holy Spirit* there are over 1,000 names of God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Each name describes an unique character or task of God, teaching us more about Him. Meditating on God's name gives us a better understanding of who He is and how He relates to us. Our Malachi example inevitably draws us into a deeper relationship with Him.

The Korah Model focuses on knowing God intimately. Twelve Psalms are attributed to the sons of Korah who sang, “We have thought, O God, on Your loving kindness, in the midst of Your temple” (Psalm 48:9). These writers longed to know God. They are different from Korah their patriarchal head, who was judged by God for refusing to come to the sanctuary of God. The Sons of Korah cry out, “As the young deer panteth after the water streams, so panteth my soul after You, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God” (Psalm 42:1,2). They were singers in the Temple who wrote, “My soul longeth, yea even fainteth for the courts of the Lord” (Psalm 84:2), and “For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand . . .” (Psalm 84:10).

What to Take Away

Kyle Duncan, editor of Regal Books said my books were an unique blend of deeper life intimacy with God and user-friendly practicality. I hope this is true. I want you to intimately know God and meditate on Him. Therefore, there are several sections at the end of each chapter to make meditation easy to begin and do.

Superglue and Perfume

Perfume: I want you to delight in the experience of God's fragrance.

Superglue: I want you to make these practical ideas stick to your soul.

A young bride from the East married during war time, and her husband was transferred to a US Army base in the desert of California. Living conditions were marginal, the heat was unbearable, the desert constantly blew dust and sand in the house, and her days were boring because her husband was gone most of the time. Their neighbors spoke only Spanish or were Native Americans from the reservation who did not speak English.

The young woman wrote her mother that she was coming home because she
it any more. Her mother wrote back simply two lines,

one saw mud the other saw stars.

stars. She made friends with the Indians, learned weaving,
everything she could about Indian history and culture. Later in life she became an expert and

What you think,

And what you are,

Towns, Elmer. *Biblical Meditation for Spiritual Breakthrough* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books), 1998. All rights reserved. To order, call: REGAL BOOKS, 1-800-235-3415.