

*Categorical Meditation:
The One Answer to
All Problems*

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All Scripture quotations, unless otherwise noted, are from the King James Version. Italics for emphasis are ours.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION 5

Chapter 1 7

TRUE HAPPINESS

Chapter 2 13

THE FRUIT OF MEDITATION

Chapter 3 17

BREAKING THE MATURITY BARRIER

CONCLUSION 24

INTRODUCTION

It would be safe to say that the one thing people seek for today is happiness. We live in a world that is filled with violence. According to Romans 6:6 and 7:24, we live in bodies of sin and death that have established lust patterns (see Ephesians 2:3; 4:22). How is it possible to find happiness?

With everything that is going on in the world, there is something that can make us happy. God reveals it to us in Psalm 1:2, “[The blessed man’s] delight is in the law of the LORD; and *in his law doth he meditate day and night.*”

One of the meanings of the word “law” is categorical doctrine—how to think with God in preciseness. As we hide categorical doctrine in our hearts, the Holy Spirit will be faithful to give us counsel for every single problem we have. The key, though, is to meditate on His Word day and night. This is the one answer for every problem we face.

Meditation is the secret behind every effective pulpit. It's the key to every man's anointing, the key to every ministry's success. Meditation will keep us from stress, fear, worry, lust, insecurity, and a poor self-image.

Let the Holy Spirit minister the life of this message to your soul. In faith, respond to the call to godly categorical meditation, which will produce the highest degree of happiness, regardless of what happens in the world around you.

Chapter One
TRUE HAPPINESS

“*Blessed* is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.

“The ungodly are not so: but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away. Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. For the LORD knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish” (Psalm 1:1-6).

The word “blessed,” in Psalm 1:1, is equivalent to a plural noun form in the Hebrew, meaning “happinesses.”

A couple owned a store. They worked hard—

hadn't taken a vacation for sixteen years. Then one night, the store was robbed and the husband was killed. In tears his wife said to the reporters on the scene, "All we ever wanted was to finally have a vacation and find some happiness. That's all!"

A young girl visited our church recently and accepted Jesus as her Savior. She convinced her boyfriend to come with her, but a few days after his second visit, he fell back into his addiction and overdosed. Only thirty years old, he sought happiness through drugs—*and he died*.

Many professional athletes lead shipwrecked lives behind the scenes. They seek happiness through their wealth, popularity, and relationships, but these things can never bring lasting happiness.

How can people in bodies of sin and death truly find the inner peace and happiness they seek?

Several years ago, a precious lady in our church was diagnosed with cancer in her jaw. Surgeons successfully removed the tumor; but since then, she has undergone numerous reconstructive operations. Not long ago, doctors found a spot on her lung and scheduled a biopsy; but during preoperative tests, X rays re-

vealed that the spot was gone. *God had healed her!* This woman is doing very well. She is very relaxed, always edifies others, and is extremely happy. She knows the secret of true happiness, having learned how to meditate according to Psalm 1: on God's Word with the Holy Spirit.

The Benefits of Meditation

In an international scientific study conducted over the last twenty-four years, researchers from several major universities and institutions verified that "Meditation brings tremendous benefits to the mind, body, behavior, and environment. The research demonstrates that meditation is the most effective method for dissolving stress and promoting health, mental potential, personal growth, and social harmony. The physiological effects of meditation include reduced blood pressure, lower pulse rate, and a decreased metabolic rate.

"High levels of stress cause many problems, including ill health, family breakdown, disciplinary problems in juveniles, substance abuse, and a life span of sixteen years less than the general population. These high levels of stress have led to criminal violence and dysfunctional behavior. Some prison systems throughout the

world have integrated meditation into their rehabilitation programs. The documented evidence proves a decrease in prison rule infractions, a decrease in violence, a reduction in negative character traits, decreased anxiety, increased participation in positive activities, improved health, and development of personality.”

Though they may not have been motivated by God, the people in this study discovered the value of meditation.

It is important to note at this point that over the centuries, Satan has offered a counterfeit of true, godly meditation through many religious practices. But Psalm 119:11, 15 says, *“Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee....I will meditate in thy precepts, and have respect unto thy ways.”* So much activity in the New Age movement applies *principles* of the knowledge of God, but denies the authority of His Word. Although people may reap the benefits of applying godly principles, the effects are only temporal. Their end is destruction unless they receive the free gift of salvation by grace through faith in Jesus Christ’s atonement.

Delight in Doctrine

Psalm 1:1 says, “Happineses” belong to the

man who *walks not* in the counsel of the ungodly, who *stands not* in the way of sinners, who *sits not* in the seat of the scornful. Notice the digression in this verse.

First, when the wrong counsel comes into a believer's heart, it is because he is not filled with the Word of God. Then, because he is not right with God, he stands in the way of others who could be saved and go to heaven. He stands in their way because of spiritual lethargy. Finally, he sits in the seat of the scornful, mocking God's provision and the Word of God for his life.

God is saying that if you *don't* do these things, then you'll be happy.

Psalm 1:2-3, however, reveals what the blessed man *does* do: "His *delight* is in the law of the LORD; and in God's law does he meditate day and night. He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water. He shall bring forth his fruit in his season; his leaf shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper." Through meditation on the Word of God, we find true happiness.

In verse 2, "delight," *chephetes* in the Hebrew, means that the blessed man's will is bent toward God's will and provision. This man's delight is in doctrine. Do we really *delight* in doctrine? We know we're supposed to live by it and judge by

it. We know we will give account for every Word of God at the Bema Seat, but how many can truly say, "I'm hungry and thirsty after the mind of God, after the Word of God, after the law of God, after the character of God, after the grace of God"? How many can confess, "I delight in every opportunity I have to hear the Word of God"?

Chapter Two

THE FRUIT OF MEDITATION

The devil has counterfeited biblical meditation through religious and spiritual practices that are not influenced by the holy Word of God. *Siyach*, the Hebrew word for meditation, refers to silent reflection, focusing on a particular subject with no inner or outer distractions. As believers, we “turn over” (reflect or ponder) categories in the Word of God one at a time until they produce personal convictions. We turn them over until we have communion with God in fellowship. We turn them over until the theme of the subject breaks our hearts and we are quickened by the words of meditation. Then, as prepared vessels with prepared hearts, we have a prepared message for communication.

A pastor must do more than study for a message before he preaches. People sometimes ask me how it is possible that I know as many verses as I do. I tell them it doesn't come from just

studying and memorization, but through meditation.

The Word of God says in Psalm 143:5c, “I *muse* on the work of thy hands.” That means to ponder, reflect, concentrate, focus, reiterate, rehearse, and respond. “While I was musing the fire burned” (Psalm 39:3). “I will meditate in thy precepts” (Psalm 119:15). “Precepts” means categories of doctrine. “I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee in the night watches” (Psalm 63:6).

My life is filled with meditation. As I study, I meditate on the Word of God until it turns into musing. Then as a prepared vessel, I have a prepared heart that is able to communicate God’s message to my congregation.

Prosperity

The Word of God says in Joshua 1:8, “This book of the law [(doctrine)] shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: *for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.*”

We have found a formula for prosperity, success, and happiness in the soul through God’s

provision of meditation. The research cited at the beginning of this message concluded that meditation is the answer to many of life's problems. And though the subjects of this study may have a concept of meditation that differs from that of a born-again believer, they understand the basic principles and agree that meditation does away with stress, pressures, bad health, and poor mental capacity.

When you have worked hard and you're tired, enter into silent reflection on a theme from God's Word and focus on the Person of Christ in meditation.

When Psalm 1:3 says the believer who meditates day and night will be "like a tree planted by the rivers of water," it is speaking of the river of the Holy Spirit (John 7:37-39). Psalm 1:3 continues, "...he shall bring forth his fruit in his season..." meaning there are different kinds of fruit for different seasons in our lives.

"...His leaf also shall not wither...." On earth, God created evergreen trees that produce and maintain their "leaves" throughout the cold dark winter. And in heaven, God has trees that are *forevergreen!* Yet, there is a difference.

"...Whatsoever he doeth shall prosper." In heaven, the ever green Tree of Life will produce

fruit continually (Revelation 22:2). God is saying you will bring forth fruit, and the freshness of mercy shall never wither. He will make your way prosperous, and you *will* have good success!

Our Example

Jesus was always meditating. Often, He went alone to meditate. In Mark 3:7, we find Him by the sea with His disciples, meditating. Often, the Lord would seek solitude up on a mountain where He could spend time with His Father, praying and meditating (Matthew 14:23; 15:29).

The writer of Psalm 119 specifically mentions meditation seven times: “O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day” (verse 97). (See also verses 15, 23, 48, 78, 99, and 148.)

When Psalm 107:20 says that God sends the Word of God to heal us, it refers to meditation. Healing comes through meditation. Deliverance comes through meditation. Happiness comes from meditation. And meditation also produces a positive volition.

Chapter Three

BREAKING THE
MATURITY BARRIER

The Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5 teaches how believers can be the happiest people in the world. It is God's divine blueprint for happiness. The beatitudes are not just a collection of nice sayings. Every verse is a crucial part of a relevant sequence from the mind of God, bringing the believer to a point of maturity.

The first thing Jesus said in this sermon is, "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 5:3).

"Poor in spirit" means that God is so close that you become broken because of personal sin. Brokenness produces humility, and the measure of my humility will equal the measure of my deliverance. That humility will become the measure of my capacity to receive the Word of God as well as the measure of my spiritual blessings. "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for *theirs* is the

kingdom of God.”

Then Jesus said, “Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted” (Matthew 5:4).

To “mourn” means that you are so close to God, the least little thing you do wrong makes you broken. A little thing that wouldn’t even be sin to some people makes you broken, not because you’re condemned, but because you want so much to be like Jesus. A person who mourns will have a godly sorrow that works repentance—not as the sorrow of the world which works death, but a godly sorrow that works a change of mind, a change of attitude, a change of confession, and a change of behavior. When this happens, the Holy Spirit is able to bring comfort so you don’t have to feel depressed or rejected.

An Appetite for Divine Realities

“Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth” (Matthew 5:5).

Notice the sequence so far: First, you’re broken. Then, you mourn because of personal sin. And that makes you *meek*. The meek Christian says, “Oh God, if You can forgive *me*, then I want to have Your Spirit toward others that are like me. I don’t want to run them down or con-

demn them. I want to understand them.”

Brokenness and mourning make us meek, which makes us completely open for God to love us, to love others through us, and to have His plan established in us.

“Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled” (Matthew 5:6).

You have been convicted of sin. You have mourned and hated the things you have done, and the Holy Spirit comforted you. Then, as the Spirit filled you, He produced meekness. Now you have a hunger and thirst for righteousness. You want to seek after it (Matthew 6:33). When righteousness is imparted through the Word, it makes you happy and you realize you can’t live without it.

Matthew 5:6*b* says that those who hunger and thirst after righteousness shall be filled. God never leaves us hanging. If we hunger and thirst after righteousness, we *will* be filled.” The Lord promised in Jeremiah 29:13-14*a*, “Ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart. And I will be found of you, saith the LORD.”

A Pure Heart of Mercy

“Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy” (Matthew 5:7).

Now you have a river of mercy flowing through you when you hear about people you don't even know and all the trials they go through. You think of that thirty-year-old man who killed himself with an overdose of drugs and you cry out, “Oh, what a waste!” And then you think of the couple who worked so hard in their store for sixteen years only to have it end in a tragic death. Because God is filling you, considering the sorrow and suffering in the world makes you merciful toward others in their situations.

“Happineses” belong to those who are merciful. Why? Because a merciful person never holds a grudge, never brings up the past, and never mentions what people have done to him. He doesn't live with a negative attitude and he doesn't have a negative confession. He's broken. He's sorry for his sin. God comforts him and brings in a spirit of meekness so he can inherit the good things of the earth. By God's grace, he becomes hungry and thirsty for righteousness, and God keeps filling him, and that makes him

merciful.

“Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God” (Matthew 5:8).

When you get into the Scriptures and you meditate and muse on the Word of God, suddenly, your heart begins to be purified. You have already been cleansed and purged positionally by the blood of Jesus Christ, but now you experience a purity in your life you’ve never had before.

Being pure in heart means that when you think of hell, you weep for the people going there. When you think of heaven, you want everyone to go to heaven. When you think of marriage, you want godly couples to have the best marriages in this hell-bound world that we live in. You want families to be sacred and have eternal values, and you want your church to be the best it possibly can be.

A man told me the story of his life. For twenty-six years he was addicted to drugs, but God has supernaturally healed him. For months he hasn’t had a single relapse or even a desire to go back on drugs. What’s happening to him? He’s in the Matthew 5 process.

The Pinnacle of Maturity

“Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall

be called the children of God" (Matthew 5:9).

When you've gone from being broken because of sin to being pure in heart, all you want to do is be a peacemaker. You know God has forgiven and forgotten your sins. He has cleansed and purged you. Now you don't want to have bad feelings toward anyone. You just want to be a peacemaker.

Finally, Jesus closes this part of His Sermon on the Mount with the words, "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.

"Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men,

that they may see your good works [(the fruit of your Father's works)], and glorify your Father which is in heaven" (Matthew 5:10-16).

The believer who can rejoice and be happy when he is persecuted and spoken evil of has broken the greater grace maturity barrier. Nothing moves him. He doesn't count his life dear unto himself. In the purest form, he has become the salt of the earth and the light of the world. Through categorical meditation on the Word of God, he has manifold wisdom for every problem he could ever face. He is truly the "blessed man."

CONCLUSION

The Word of God...

*Think of it carefully, Study it prayerfully,
Deep in thine heart Let its oracles dwell.
Ponder its mysteries, Slight not its histories.
None can e'er love it Too fondly or well.*

—*Author unknown*

Meditate on the Word. Do not stand in the way of sinners. Do not walk in the counsel of the ungodly. Do not sit in the seat of the scornful, but delight as you meditate in the Word of God day and night.

I don't know how many times I get up in the middle of the night from a sound sleep and write Scriptures down because my subconscious mind is meditating while my conscious mind sleeps.

Meditation is the way to prosperity. It is the

only way to be blessed by God, the only way to be happy. We may start out poor in spirit, mourning because of our sin; but soon, we become meek, hungry and thirsty for righteousness, merciful, and pure in heart. At last we become peacemakers. And, yes, we are persecuted because we're making an impact on Satan's world system. Still, we rejoice in persecution because our reward in heaven is great.

May we have a happiness that doesn't come from worldly pleasures or from soulish stimulation of a false peace produced by the devil's counterfeit. Rather, we desire happiness that is derived from the power and love of God in communion with our souls through meditation. May God help us learn how to muse in the Holy Spirit until the Word becomes conviction, communion, fellowship, and brokenness, making us prepared vessels with a prepared message for prepared hearts.