

BIBLE STUDY

Session 6

Meditative

This is the sixth session on Bible Study that will focus on using meditative practices to study scripture. Meditating on scripture is as old as scripture itself. The practices of meditating on God's Word an integral part of how we listen to God and ruminate on the Word in order to probe, ponder, and explore so that the words of scripture become God's Word in our lives.

Opening Activities



Centering Moment

Light a candle and observe 30 seconds of silence as a reminder of God's presence among us.



Psalm 49:3

"Do not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may prove what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect."



Reflect

Reflect on what "meditation of my heart" means for you.



Opening Prayer:

Gracious Lord, Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable to you, O Lord, my rock and my redeemer. Amen.



Music (optional)

Listen to "The Meditations of My Heart" by Elaine Hagenberg
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r3j9BcIzI0k>



Share

Share with one another any thoughts from last weeks' exercises or session.



Watch: Bible Study - Meditative



Group Bible Study - Meditation (Lectio Divina)

Prepare with a moment of silence.

The Leader will instruct the participants to think as they listen to what catches their attention, what words, phrases or images they hear as though for the first time.

Read Philippians 2:1-11 out loud, slowly, and participants will listen silently.

Sit in silence for 1-2 minutes.

Invite participants to share words, phrases, or images (don't worry about meaning or interpretation at this juncture)

Read it a second time, asking participants to focus on any phrase or image to which they feel drawn. Contemplate: Why do you feel drawn to it? What does it remind you of? What meaning does it hold for you? What could God be saying to you?

After 2-3 minutes, share responses to the questions with the group.

Read the passage a third time. Shift from conversing with yourself to conversing with God. Tell God what the passage evokes in you, then listen and respond to what god has to say.

After three minutes of silence, participate in a time of shared prayer, lifting to God the thanksgiving, concerns, and intercessions that meditation on the text has called forth.

Rest: Take time to silently rest in God's loving presence. Release yourselves and your prayers to God in trust. Allow several minutes of quiet.



Discuss

- What was this experience like for you? What did you receive? What did you find helpful? What did you find obtrusive or unnatural?



Closing Prayer

Choose a prayer style that you have learned about to close.



Exercises To Do At Home

Practicing Meditative Bible Study

- **Step 1:** Choose a text from the Scriptures that you wish to pray. When choosing scripture, length of text can depend on what God is calling you to do – it can be a verse or an entire chapter. (Some suggestions: Psalm 23 (“The Lord is my shepherd...”); Mark 4:35-41 (Jesus calms the storm); Luke 22:39-44 (agony in the garden) John 15:1-17 (the vine and the branches); Philippians 2:1-13 (“have among yourselves the same attitude as Christ Jesus...”))
- **Step 2:** Place yourself in a comfortable position and allow yourself to become silent. Focus for a few moments on their breathing or use a beloved “prayer word” or “prayer phrase” you gently recite. (This is putting “centering prayer” to use). Use whatever method is best for you, and allow yourself to enjoy silence for a few moments.
- **Step 3:** Turn to the text and read it slowly, peacefully. Take in each portion of the reading, constantly listening for the “still, small voice” of one word or phrase that somehow says, “I am for you today.” Realize that the phrase or word may not jump out at you, but reveal itself slowly. Choose that word or phrase and repeat it out loud.
- **Step 4:** Read the text again; however, this time place yourself in the Bible scene or in a situation where you are speaking to God. In your journal write out the scene or situation you (we) envisioned while rereading the passage.
- **Step 5:** Read the text for a third time and this time contemplate what God is inviting you to do. What do you think is being communicated, what is God trying to tell you, what is revealing itself through scripture? If you wish to reread the text again, feel free, there are unlimited amounts of time one can reflect on a passage.