

# DISCIPLINE FOR GODLINESS

## DISCIPLINE OF DEVOTION

### *Muttering*

When the Psalmist speaks of meditating on the Law of God day and night ([Psalm 1:2](#)), he uses a word which means “to mutter.”

[Psalm 1:2 \(NASB\)](#)

<sup>2</sup>“But his delight is in the law of the LORD, And in His law he meditates day and night.”

This word was used to describe the murmurings of kings in [Psalm 2:1](#), and for the chattering of doves in [Isaiah 59:11](#).

[Psalm 2:1 \(NASB\)](#)

<sup>1</sup>“Why are the nations in an uproar And the peoples devising a vain thing?”

[Isaiah 59:11 \(NASB\)](#)

<sup>11</sup>“All of us growl like bears, And moan sadly like doves; We hope for justice, but there is none, For salvation, *but* it is far from us.”

In fact, St. Augustine translated [Psalm 1:2](#), “On his law he chatters day and night.” **Meditation is intrinsically verbal.** This means the Psalmist *memorized* God’s Word — for one cannot continually mutter the Scripture without memorizing it, and vice versa.

Personally applied, this tells us that along with our systematic reading of the Bible, we ought to select especially meaningful segments to reverently mutter over. Sometimes it may be a single verse — [Philippians 3:10](#), for example, the four emphases of which I like to murmur in the **NASB**:

“... that I may know Him,  
and the power of His resurrection,  
and the fellowship of His sufferings,  
being conformed to His death.”

Slowly and prayerfully turning over Scripture in this manner engages the eyes, the ears, and the mouth, and drills through the granite to the heart — maximizing internalization and devotion.

Larger segments, especially classic texts, are tailor-made for meditation. **The Ten Commandments**, with the **first four Godward commands**, and the **six manward**

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**injunctions** following, should be regularly murmured in reverent self-examination (cf. [Exodus 20:1–17](#) and [Deuteronomy 5:1–22](#)).

There are eight **Beatitudes** which consecutively consider **poverty of spirit**, **mourning over sin**, **gentleness**, **spiritual hunger**, **mercy**, **purity**, **peacemaking**, and **persecution**.

The **Disciple’s Prayer** begins with the foundational awareness “**Our Father, who art in Heaven**” and then presents three *upward* petitions and three *horizontal* petitions — a perfect pattern for prayer and meditation. There are endless possibilities, including the so-called *kenosis* passage, [Philippians 2:5–11](#), which begins, “**Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus....**” Other food for meditation includes Jesus’ parables, the Psalms, and the epigrams of James. Both practical and esoteric passages can provide divine substance for reverent soul chatter.

The effects of meditation are supernal, bringing:

- *Revival* — “**The law of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul**” ([Psalm 19:7](#)).
- *Wisdom* — “**The statutes of the Lord are trustworthy, making wise the simple**” ([Psalm 19:7](#)); “**Oh, how I love your law! I meditate on it all day long. Your commands make me wiser than my enemies, for they are ever with me**” ([Psalm 119:97-98](#)).
- *Increases in our faith* — “**Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ**” ([Romans 10:17](#)).

We may be challenged, convicted, and exhilarated with the call to meditation. The question is, how is this to be done? The Scriptures say it should be continual, telling us we ought to meditate “**day and night**” ([Psalm 1:2](#); cf. [Psalm 119:97](#)), and even while we lie awake at night ([Psalm 63:6](#); [Psalm 119:148](#)). Ideally, we are to make meditation part of our regular devotion, giving hidden time to reverently muttering God’s Word. But even our busy schedules can be punctuated with Scriptural meditation — in the car, at lunch break, or waiting for a bus. Select a choice text, write it on a card, and slip it into your pocket. Pull it out in those spare moments. **Murmur it. Memorize it. Pray it. Say it. Share it.**

The discipline of meditation is a **MUST**. Moses told Israel as he finished the “**Song of Moses**”: “**Take to heart all the words I have solemnly declared to you this day.... They are not just idle words for you — they are your life**” ([Deuteronomy 32:46-47](#), italics added).