

How to Meditate: The MAP Method

Find a portion of Scripture relevant to your problem or find one that deals with a Bible principle or truth you wish to master. Always meditate on Scripture that God's Spirit 'highlights' as you are reading His Word.

Memorize the Passage

This often occurs automatically if the passage is studied intensely enough in the next step. It is important when facing difficult times or temptations to know exactly what God said word for word. Satan was able to gain a toehold in Eve's life because she did not know exactly what God said. She had a general idea, but that isn't good enough when dealing with an enemy as deceptive as Satan. Satan twists Scripture and uses it out of context constantly in his battle with believers. A person who cannot remember God's exact words is in danger of "leaning on his own understanding" (Proverbs 3:5-6).

Analyze the Passage

Study the passage asking the Holy Spirit to give you a thorough understanding of its message.

1. Intensive Focus: study of the words in the passage

List the major words in the passage and use an English dictionary to find out the meaning of each word. If possible, look up each word in a Greek or Hebrew dictionary or check out the meaning for each in Strong's Exhaustive Concordance. Once you are sure of each word's meaning, put the passage in your own words (paraphrase it).

2. Extensive Focus: study of the context and purpose of the passage

Use a commentary on the passage or study the notes in a good study Bible. Try to understand who the passage was written to and why.

Personalize the Passage

Plan out concrete ways for change in your life that are consistent with your understanding of the passage you just studied. Plans include schedules, details, techniques, steps, and procedures. Ask yourself, "When have I failed to do this in the past? When am I likely to meet it again? What will be my response the next time I meet this? Think through the 'game plan' thoroughly and in advance of the next temptation. Use the passage in personal prayer to God. For example, a person meditating on James 4:1-11 may begin a prayer like this:

"Lord, you tell me here in James 4:1 that the conflict I'm having with John is the result of my own lusts, my own desires to have something my way. I know that isn't pleasing to You. Instead of responding in anger to John, I need Your help and grace which you promised in James 4:6 when You said that You resist the proud but give grace to the humble. Help me to humble myself instead of proudly insisting on my way and to allow You to lift me up in Your time..."