

06.12.11 / Joshua 1:7 and 8

Passage Insight

The Lord not only asks us to bear fruit, but He then makes it possible, equipping and enabling us, doing the work, garnering all glory for the fruit that is borne. A part of this process, He calls us to give full recognition of His ways and His character, as revealed to us in His Law. In today's passage, we see the importance of meditating on the Book of the Law, which is referring to the written works of Moses. In Luke 24:27, Jesus explains that the books of Moses point to Him. The passage says, "And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself." Matthew 5:17-18 shows Jesus as the fulfillment of the Law of God, where He says, "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished." This brings us to realize that meditation on the Law of God necessarily leads us to meditate on Christ Himself as the fulfillment of the Law. In Jesus we see a full and complete picture of the nature of God, in whom the fullness of God dwells, as we see in Colossians 2:9, which reads, "For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily. . ."

So, what does it look like to meditate on Christ? Because He has given us His Holy Spirit to dwell in us, we have power from God Himself to walk toward in the Spirit. The fruit of such a life is seen in Galatians 5:16-25. 1 Corinthians 2:16 tells us that those who follow Jesus have the mind of Christ, and clearly the mind of Christ, who is the full picture of God and the fulfillment of the Law, unceasingly and perfectly meditates on God's Law. As we are being made more and more into His image and likeness, our thoughts will increasingly reflect those of our Lord. In 2 Corinthians 10:5 Paul says, "We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ. . ." By God's power, we will " . . . destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God. . .", even our own arguments and opinions from within our own minds. In order to know which arguments are against the knowledge of God, we must first possess such knowledge. This happens by our increasing study of and meditation on the Scriptures, which point us to God. Furthermore, as Jesus so beautifully explains in Luke 10:38-42, the good portion for us is sitting at the feet of Jesus and listening to His teaching. In Matthew 28, Jesus commands us to obey all that He has commanded. We sit at His feet and listen to His teaching and learn what it means to obey Him as we read and heed His words to us in the Scriptures and study how the Scriptures point to Him, from the Book of the Law, as written by Moses, to the words of the New Testament, which name Him as Savior.

Ultimately, the reason we are called to submission to the Father's instruction is that this obedience, this submission, is an attribute of God Himself, and as we are being made more and more into His image and likeness, the more we are made like Him, the more we will adhere to the fulfillment of the Law, the more we will adhere to and become like Christ. The strength, the courage, and ultimately the fruit of our efforts, are not a product of our meditations. They are ultimately the work of the Holy Spirit within us, which allows for and causes our works to be good. It is not an act of sheer will. The Lord has seen fit to allow us to reach out, to strive, and to have this exertion of effort be a good thing. Striving, reaching out, and putting forth effort are not bad things at all. The motivation for such action is where we see good and evil, light and dark. All this is to say that we can and should put forth every effort to meditate on Christ, to read His words, to pursue His kingdom and His righteousness, as He is the complete and utter fulfillment of the Law of God. To do so is to love Him, as we see in John 14:15-17, where Jesus says, "If you love me, you will keep my commandments."

We should exert every ounce of our energy, loving Him with every available resource, as we are called to do in Matthew 22:37-38, where Jesus says, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment.” With all of our affection, with every thought within our mind, and with every ounce of our physical strength, we should strive to meditate on Jesus, the fulfillment of the Law of God, and in this, to be increasingly changed by the Holy Spirit to become more and more like the One on whom we meditate.

Application and Prayer

Meditating on the Attributes of Jesus

- 1) What aspect of Jesus is most surprising to you?
- 2) What aspect of Jesus do you automatically assume and/or take for granted?
- 3) Discover where in Scripture these attributes are addressed, and study them. Perhaps meditation on these attributes of Jesus would be the most revealing for you personally.
- 4) PRAY
 - a. For clear understanding on where to look in Scripture for an accurate picture of Jesus
 - b. That you would encounter Jesus as He IS, not as you suspect Him to be

Obedience to the Scriptures

- 1) All the Scriptures point to Jesus. Where do you struggle to believe in the trustworthiness of the Scriptures?
- 2) As Christians, the power and efficacy of our actions are not in our raw exertion of effort, but rather in the Holy Spirit who encourages and enables us toward obedience. Where do you struggle to obey the Scriptures?
- 3) What sins (which is diametrically opposed to the work of the Spirit) are leading to this struggle?
- 4) PRAY
 - a. For a right understanding of who God is
 - b. For eyes to see that the Scriptures are shown to be trustworthy in that they point us to a trustworthy God

Not Departing From Your Mouth

- 1) Colossians 3:16 says, “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.” How have you personally been blessed when someone has spoken Scripture to you, even casually?
- 2) How can you be more prepared to bless others in the body of Christ by speaking the word of God to them?
- 3) Be encouraged. When you speak Scripture rightly to one another, you can trust God to speak among the body, not your flesh.
- 4) PRAY
 - a. For a right understanding of Scripture
 - b. For the courage to speak God’s word to one another
 - c. For the truth of God’s word to lift up, encourage, and enlighten us as we gather, whether in 2’s or in the 1000’s

Sources

- Prayer

- Be Strong
- The Bible Knowledge Commentary
- The Bible Reader's Companion
- Commentary on the Old Testament