

Can I Regress In My Faith?

'Christ died for your sins, was buried, and rose again.' Trusting His blood enables you to know you're saved from the debt and penalty of sin and have forgiveness, eternal life, and the Spirit.

Yet, some Christians are lulled to sleep, living as before they believed: Personally reading little Scripture and not living the Truth. Regression (taking steps back) will occur, as it did with Israel in the past. Saints will still go to heaven; no one ever loses 'eternal life.' However, they may become confused, high-minded, or even question if they're saved, forgetting the comfort & clarity of the gospel.

What can be done to avoid regression? Begin regular study: *"According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man **take heed** how he buildeth thereupon."* (1 Cor. 3:10)

This verse teaches you are responsible to mature and to 'form Christ in you' properly, on the Apostle Paul's teaching, as the 'master-builder.' (Romans-Philemon) Use this sound doctrine to wisely build onto the foundation of 'the cross.' Paul's admonition, *"Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ."* (1 Corinthians 11:1)

Stay in Scripture to be confident, grow, and avoid regression.

Christian Life Coach Support Services

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Just A Minute! With Scripture

The King James Bible is used for all references. Verses may be underlined, or made bold for emphasis.



Even mature believers can turn from their faith to live in the world again: *"For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ..."* (Philippians 3:18)

God has perfectly anticipated man's needs. Scripture can help those who have regressed, but also prevent it from happening altogether. How? Stay in the Word, *"And be renewed in the spirit of your mind..."* (Ephesians 4:23) Maintain what you've 'attained unto' (learned) by living your convictions (what's believed). Philippians 3:16 says, *"Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing."* Reflect on where you are, then choose to live it for Christ!



Dear Saints: Many struggle during the holidays and can lose sight of their hope. Maybe you are not sure if you are saved, or have even turned back to live in the world, choosing to live ungodly. God still loves you!

There are believers who also care and desire to help. Find a wise spiritual friend, or Bible leader in your Church or local area, who understands grace, to listen and help by sharing the Scripture's answers.

If you're unable to locate such a resource, contact us at Christian Life Coach Support Services.



Christian Life Coach Support Services

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Romans 12: Student Study Insights



Roman Epistle: Designed to Establish the Body of Christ

Romans 12:10 *Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another...*

Romans 12-16 begins our practical education as adult believers (sons): 'Worship and service.' When a saint progresses to Romans 12, 'A living Sacrifice,' he has been taught the basics in his identity in Christ and realizes he needs to grow in selfless love. As Christ gave Himself for us, God also wants us to put aside fears and personal desires to serve Him. *"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. (Romans 12:1)* A glorious privilege!

Search out new insights in Romans 12:

1. The opening words are often key to understand a chapter: Could this be true in Verse 1?

- a) "I beseech you" shows Paul's gracious request, but can it also help you in your service?
- b) The word 'therefore' stirs up doctrine already taught in Romans. What/Why?

2. Each verse progresses you: Romans 12:3 may seem out of place, at first. Yet, think about man's tendency in the flesh, especially when

dealing with others who have needs. How is it important to know in order to serve others?

3. First an instruction, then how to do it: What's the instruction in Verse 1? Which verses explain 'how' to accomplish it? Explore this further.

4. Introduction of a new concept: Notice/study 'new doctrines' as they are presented, such as the 'connectedness of all believers' in Verses 4 and 5. What can you learn about this topic here?

5. How to approach confusing groups of words: Consider the phrases: dealt to every man the measure of faith, the grace that is given, and according to the proportion of faith. Meditate on each word, use a dictionary, and then, assess the context. Also, examine similarities/differences by doing word studies, noting the context, using a concordance. (Hint: These phrases may relate to Verse 1-2, taking in the Word to renew your mind.)

6. Label, then study each section of this chapter: 12:1-5, 12:6-8, 12:9-16, 12:17-21. Ask questions like, What general principles does Verses 9-16 teach to help you serve in the body of Christ?

***Newer students: Focus on 'reading' Scripture rather than on study insights. When ready, do try one.**

Romans 12:2 *"And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind..."*

Scripture Can Have A Profound Impact... So, Renew Your Mind

Reading the Word of God **can** become an exciting mystery adventure, with a powerful influence on your life now, even to deal with earthly challenges, but also your eternal life:

... **When it is seen as cherished counsel from the Creator and your Father:** *"She is more precious than rubies: and all the things thou canst desire are not to be compared unto her."* (Proverbs 3:15)

... **To those who regularly read and meditate on Scripture, placing it into their heart:** *"...when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe."* (1 Thessalonians 2:13)

... **As saints realize their amazing privilege, and responsibility to feed on the Word:** *"If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures..."* (Proverbs 2:4) *"...It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."* (Matthew 4:4)

Otherwise, it will **seem** like just 'another book,' still hard to read, maybe even boring, and unfruitful. But trust God, He's wise: *"For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."* (Hebrews 4:12)



Meditation With Prayer Is Beneficial

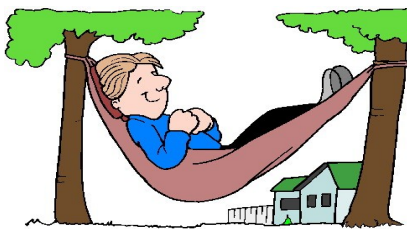
Why meditate, isn't it an ungodly, religious practice?

No, Satan is an imitator who twists the Truth. Set this view aside to learn what God teaches. God-centered meditation with prayer helps you focus on spiritual things. It can clear your mind of worldly concerns to focus on God and His Word. It also helps you learn to gain quick access to His spiritual realm within your mind.

If you are scattered, can't concentrate to pray, have more to do than you can handle, or rarely take a moment for yourself or the Lord, this article is especially for you. Meditation helps you realize who is in control of your mind; thoughts & feelings can hold you hostage.

Romans 6 teaches that the believer is to decide 'how' to think and live: "...even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness." (Romans 6:19)

Learning to 'yield your mind' is important. You do not have to be 'conformed to this world.' (Romans 12:2). You can yield 'your right' to live as you desire, to instead 'renew your mind.' Learn about meditation from God's instruction. (Always consider context) A few examples:



Joshua 1:8: "This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shall 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."

Psalms 46:10: "Be still, and know that I am God..."

Psalms 119:15, 99: "I will meditate in thy precepts, and have respect unto thy ways...I have more understanding than all my teachers: for thy testimonies are my meditation."

Philippians 4:8: "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true...honest...just...pure...lovely...of good report; if there be any virtue, if there be any praise, think on these things."

I Timothy 4:15: "Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all."



The 'How To' of Meditation
(Everyone can take 5-6 minutes... It's worth it!)

Learn how to be 'in the moment' with God. An example to begin:

- 1) Set aside 5-6 minutes each day. (This can be expanded later, when desired.)
- 2) Be quiet and comfortable. (You can choose: Sit or lay down, close your eyes, or even use soft music/nature sounds.)
- 3) Stay focused on your breathing, noticing every breath as it comes in & out.
- 4) Quiet your mind of life issues; as things 'pop up' (it's to be expected), gently, non-judgmentally, dismiss each distraction. Think of it as 'closing a window of thought.' (You can open it later) Now, just be still and enjoy the moment.
- 5) As your mind calms, focus on God in His realm. It's a delightful opportunity to commune with Him in prayer or to think on specific Scriptures. Life issues will try to interrupt. Use each opportunity to take control, putting away all concerns to yield unto God. (Romans 12:2)
- 6) Finish when desired. Open your eyes and reorient yourself to 'this world.' Reflect on your quiet mind and spirit.

You may find that after meditating even a few times, it will be easier for you to take a quiet moment through the day to pray or regain perspective. The process of giving God control of your thoughts may take a while. Your mind has had a lifetime of carrying you where 'it' wanted. Be patient with yourself. (To Do: Use a concordance and study these words, in context: meditate/meditation/quiet/peace, etc.)

Meditation is quite empowering!



Family Bible Study In N. Chesterfield
Brian's Topic: How Do We Meditate on Verses
Time: Fridays, 7-9 PM Call - (804) 519-1210



What is... Walking by sight?

II Corinthians 5:7 "For we walk by faith, not by sight..."

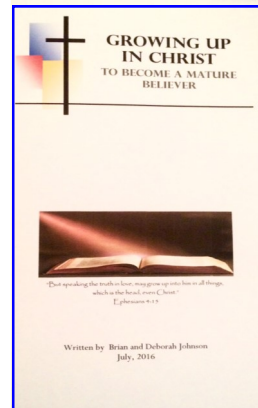


Walking by sight is proceeding through life focused on what is seen, felt, and sensed. A saint who hyper-focuses on the problem, may then pray to 'see' God's intervention: a miracle or a special word from Him. 'The flesh' is exalted and the goal: 'End my discomfort/suffering.' Pleading for 'special grace' from God is actually an imitation of the relationship God had with the 'children' of Israel: *"For the Jews require a sign..."* (I Cor. 1:22) This thinking reflects a 'developmental level' of understanding Scripture. Though hard to hear, a person who expects God to 'take away problems,' is 'spiritually young,' either in understanding or in their trust of the basic Truths in Paul's epistles.

Today, God provides by being our perfect provision and strength/wisdom for the 'inner man.' He actually uses suffering for our good to teach us. (Rom. 8:28) Saints already are fully blessed, *"Being enriched in every thing to all bountifulness, which causeth through us thanksgiving to God."* (II Cor. 9:11) God's admonition to the Body of Christ is to endure, walking by faith, relying on Christ's life within. Through study and meditation, Truth is deposited in them; this is their 'capacity to endure.' Trusting this power slowly develops a 'confident reality' of being able to get through 'any' challenge, building endurance. A problem can be confidently survived by faith; *"...knowing that tribulation worketh patience; And patience, experience; and experience, hope: And hope maketh not ashamed..."* (Romans 5:3-5)

As our example, Paul states he learned to *"...rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong."* (II Corinthians 12:9-10) Where are you in your thinking? Think on these things. (To do: Expand your thinking and study: I Cor. 10:13/II Cor. 12:7-10/Eph. 6:10-18/Phil. 1:29/I Thessalonians 3:3/II Timothy 3:12)

New Publication Available



Our booklet (54 pages) is now available and can be ordered: **'Growing Up In Christ To Become A Mature Believer'** It was written to provide concrete direction on how to progress

in your faith to mature. There is a practical review of key issues from the book of Romans. It defines terms in a way to help someone new to Bible study to grow. **To order, call (804) 519-1210.** (Suggested donation is \$7 to cover printing/shipping.) All donations are welcome.

A companion book is also in the works to further assist Bible students, 'A Romans Study Guide.' It contains chapter-by-chapter study questions on Romans and study tools.

Available early 2017

Women's Bible Studies in Chesterfield VA

1. Wed. Study: 10:30am-12 pm
 2. Friday Home Study: 1-3 pm
- Call for Info (804) 519-1210**

'On A Personal Side'

Forward feedback or questions about this newsletter. We will address all we can.

From Our Readers...

"Thank-you for your faithfulness to your ministry." (Oregon)

"Amen. Thank you so much for your support." (Africa)

"It was good to hear from you. I would like to receive your newsletter." (Florida)

"Thank you for sharing your newsletter with my husband and I. Please add us to your list." (Hawaii)