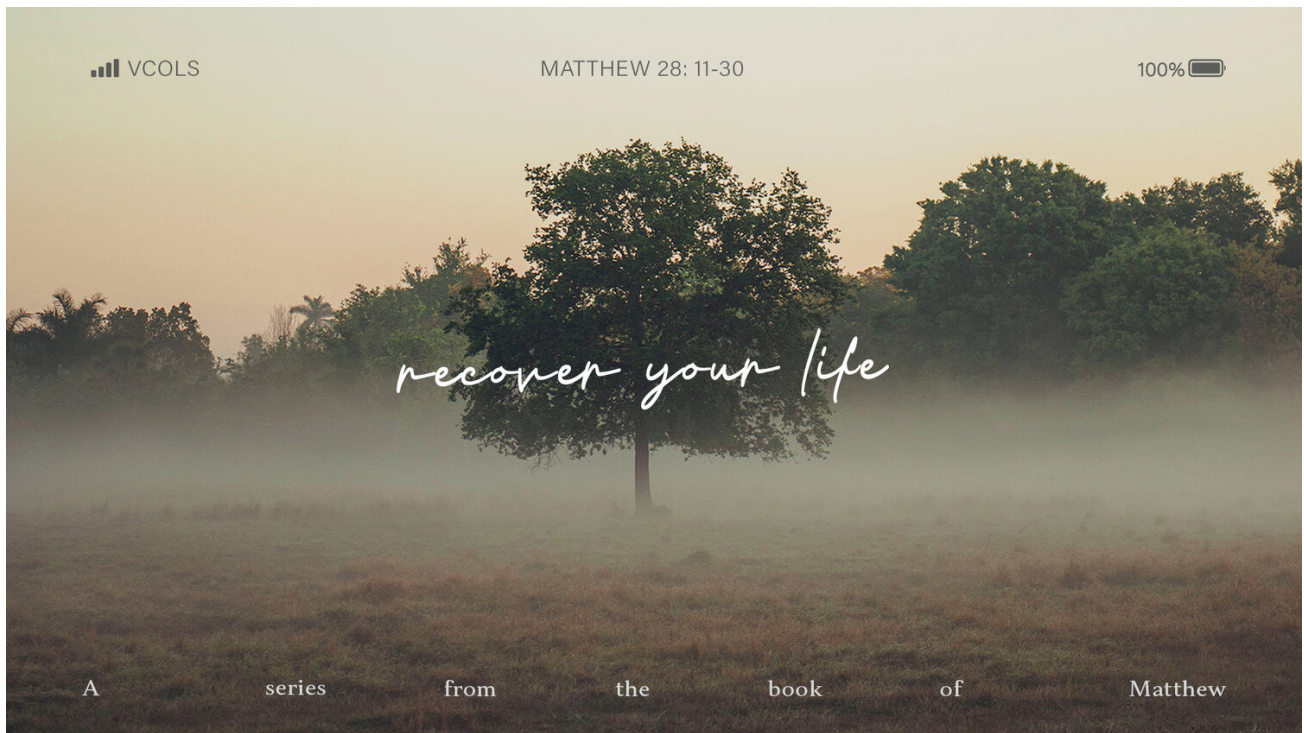


SERMON SERIES COMPANION STUDIES
FOR SMALL GROUPS



STUDY 2

Meditation & Prayer

SERMON TEXT: PSALMS 1:2, 63:6, 119:148; JOHN 15:7; THE LORD'S PRAYER

Getting Started

If you haven't done so already, share this PDF, or the link to this study, with other members of your group.

After greeting one another, take a minute or two of silence together and offer an opening prayer. If you don't all know one another already, invite each group member to share their name.

Opening Question

What do meditation and prayer mean to you?

Purpose of This Week's Study

To gather a better understanding of prayer and meditation in a Biblical context in order to use it in our everyday lives.

INTRODUCTION TO THIS WEEK'S STUDY

Meditation and prayer are practiced or referenced many different times in the Bible. We are going to look at the model in which we are instructed to pray and practice scriptural meditation as a way of connecting and resting with God.

Scripture Reading

Invite one or more group members to read the first scripture aloud.

MATTHEW 6:5-13 (NIV)

⁵ “And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. ⁶ But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you. ⁷ And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words. ⁸ Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.

⁹ “This, then, is how you should pray:

“Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
¹⁰ your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
¹¹ Give us today our daily bread.
¹² And forgive us our debts,
as we also have forgiven our debtors.
¹³ And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from the evil one.’

For Reflection & Discussion

1. In v5, we are directed to pray in the quiet, unlike hypocrites who pray to be seen by others. Why do you think we are told to pray in secret?
2. When you have prayed in the secret place, what do you feel God’s reward to you is?
3. When did you learn the Lord’s Prayer? Has its meaning or significance changed since you first learned it?
4. When you read the Lord’s prayer, do you feel like God is highlighting a specific part to you?
5. How is meditation (prayer) rooted in God or in the scriptures different from what the world says meditation is?

For Prayer Ministry

Lead your group in a guided scriptural meditation as follows:

“Make sure you’re in a comfortable position – perhaps planting both feet on the floor. Close your eyes or rest your gaze somewhere easy for you. I am going to read Psalm 23 – try to imagine yourself within the scripture.”

[Take a few seconds to let everyone imagine then begin reading the second scripture.]

PSALM 23 (NIV)

¹ The Lord is my shepherd, I lack nothing.

² He makes me lie down in green pastures,
he leads me beside quiet waters,

³ he refreshes my soul.

He guides me along the right paths
for his name's sake.

⁴ Even though I walk
through the darkest valley,

I will fear no evil,

for you are with me;
your rod and your staff,
they comfort me.

⁵ You prepare a table before me
in the presence of my enemies.

You anoint my head with oil;
my cup overflows.

⁶ Surely your goodness and love will follow me
all the days of my life,

and I will dwell in the house of the Lord
forever.

...

Take a couple of deep breaths.

[Read the scripture a second time then wait a minute or two for folks to spend in the quiet. When you feel it is appropriate, bring everyone back.]

Take another deep breath and slowly come back to the present moment.

If time allows, break up into smaller groups to talk and pray about anything that may have come up during the guided meditation.

For Further Reflection & Action Outside of Group

Practice your own scriptural meditation by using the Bible app with the audio version or you can search the verse you would like to read on YouTube and listen that way. Take time to meditate on the words and pray about what God may have called to your attention.