

1. Meditate On The Lord's Word



(Part of a six part series on spiritual disciplines)

“In the law of Jehovah is his delight and in His law he meditates by day and night. And he shall be as a tree planted by rivers of waters that gives its fruit in its time, and its leaf does not fade and all that he does shall prosper” (Psalm 1:2-3)

“Sing to Jehovah, sing psalms to Him, meditate in all His wonders....Seek after Jehovah, and His strength, seek His faces continually.” (Psalm 105:2-4)

“I meditate in Thy commandments, and look unto Thy ways. I delight in Thy statutes; I do not forget Thy word.” (Psalm 119:16)

“When I was explaining the twentieth chapter of Revelation and was meditating about ‘the dragon,’ ‘the beast,’ and ‘the false prophet,’ a certain one appeared to me.”
(Apocalypse Revealed 926)

“I saw that you were meditating on conjugal love. In this parchment are arcana of wisdom concerning it, not as yet made known in the world.” (Conjugal Love 43)

“Once, after meditating on heaven and hell....I looked towards that region in the northern quarter near the east where were the places of instruction, and by a way then opened to me, I walked thither and entered one of the colleges where were young men.” (Conjugal Love 261)

“Once when I was meditating about the Lord's second coming, there suddenly appeared a flash of light which forcibly struck my eyes.” (True Christian Religion 625)

Meditation Makes Truth Your Own

“By faith at the present day is understood nothing more than the mental presumption that a thing is so, because it is taught by the Church, and because it is not evident to the understanding. For it is said: Believe, and do not doubt. If you answer, I do not comprehend it, you are told that this is the reason why it must be believed. The faith of the present day, therefore, is a faith in what is not known, and may be called a blind faith; and as it is the dictate of one person passed on to another, it is an historical faith.” (Doctrine of Faith 1)

“Other seeds fell upon the rocky places, where they had not much earth; and when the sun was risen they were scorched, and because they had no root they withered away (Matt. 13:5-6). ‘Seeds’ signify the truths from the Word, that is, the truths a person receives from the Lord....‘Rocky places’ signify a historical faith, which is another’s faith in oneself, which is believing a thing to be true, not because one sees it in himself, but because another in whom he has confidence has said it.” (Apocalypse Explained 401)



“From infancy until childhood, and sometimes till early manhood, by instruction from his parents and teachers a person is imbued with goods and truths; for he then learns them with avidity, and believes them in simplicity. The state of innocence favors them and adapts them to the memory, but places them only at the first threshold....But when the person grows older and begins to think from himself, and not as before from parents and teachers, he then takes up again and as it were ruminates the things which he had before learned and believed, and either confirms them, or doubts about them, or denies them....When he begins to think from himself and to lead himself, if he confirms such things in himself, and adds to them things which are still more interior, and lives according to them, then it is well with him.” (Arcana Coelestia 5135)

Meditate With An Affirmative Attitude

“There are therefore two principles; one of which leads to all folly and insanity, and the other to all intelligence and wisdom. The former principle is to deny all things, or to say in the heart that we cannot believe them until we are convinced by what we can apprehend, or perceive by the senses; this is the principle that leads to all folly and insanity, and is to be called the negative principle. The other principle is to affirm the things which are of doctrine from the Word, or to think and believe within ourselves that they are true because the Lord has said them: this is the principle that leads to all intelligence and wisdom, and is to be called the affirmative principle.” (Arcana Coelestia 2568)

“Those who are in the affirmative, that is, who believe that things are true because the Lord has said so, are continually being confirmed, and their ideas enlightened and strengthened, by what is of reason and memory-knowledge, and even by what is of sense.” (Arcana Coelestia 2588)

Question: How can we reconcile the affirmative principle with the following passage about needing to see the truth of something before believing it?

“As the angels are in the spiritual affection of truth, they discard the dogma that the understanding must be kept in obedience to faith, and say, ‘What is this? believing when you do not see whether the thing is true?’ And if somebody says that still it is to be believed, they reply, ‘Do you consider yourself the Deity that I am bound to believe you? or do you think me mad enough to believe a statement in which I do not see the truth? Cause me to see it.’ Thereupon the dogmatizer betakes himself elsewhere. The wisdom of the angels consists solely in this: that they see and comprehend everything they think about.” (Doctrine of Faith 4)



Ask Questions

“And behold, a certain lawyer stood up tempting Him and saying, Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? And Jesus said to him, What is written in the Law? How do you read it?” (Luke 10:25-26)

“Which of these three in your opinion was neighbor to the robber’s victim?” (Luke 10:36)

“For who is greater, the one seated at a table or the one who serves?” (Luke 22:27)

“Do you want to be well?” (John 5:6)

“Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.” (Matthew 7:7)

“After this the angels said, ‘Let the interchange in our discussion be by questions and answers, because although a perception of something does indeed flow in when gained solely from listening, still it does not remain unless the listener also thinks about it for himself and asks questions regarding it.’” (Conjugal Love 183)



Meditate Spiritually

“When a person goes meditating from the Word, then his meditation, at a distance, appears as a horse, noble and lively, as he meditates spiritually on the Word, and, on the contrary, poor and dead, as he meditates materially.’ The boys then asked, ‘What is it to meditate on the Word spiritually and materially?’ And the master replied, ‘I will illustrate it by examples. Who, when he reads the Word, does not think of God, his neighbor, and heaven? Everyone who thinks of God only from Person, and not from Essence, thinks materially; also he who thinks of the neighbor only from form, and not from quality, thinks materially; and he who thinks of heaven only from place, and not from the love and wisdom which heaven is, he also thinks materially.’” (Apocalypse Revealed 611)



“Jesus said unto the palsied....Arise, take up your bed, and walk; and he took up the bed, and went forth from them (Mark 2:5, 9, 11-12)....By ‘carrying his bed and walking’ is signified to meditate in doctrine.” (Apocalypse Revealed 137)

“The Word by means of doctrine is not only understood, but it also as it were gives light; because without doctrine it is not understood, and it is like a lampstand without a light. The Word, therefore, by means of doctrine is understood, and is like a lampstand with its lamp lit. A person then sees more things than he had seen before, and he also understands those things which he had not understood before. Things obscure and out of agreement he either does not notice and passes over, or he sees and explains them as in agreement with doctrine.” (Doc of the Sacred Scripture 54)

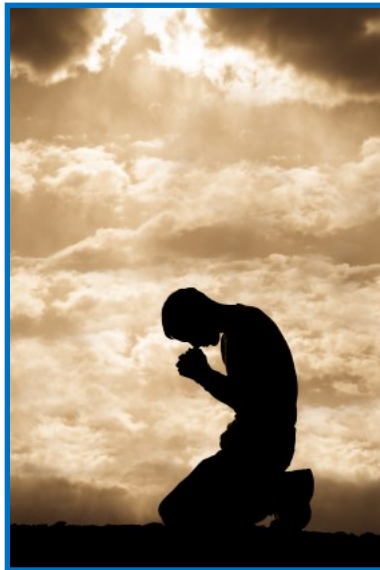


Pray For Enlightenment

“Every one who does not [read the Word under the Lord’s guidance], reads it guided by his own intelligence; and this is like an owl regarding matters which are seen only in spiritual light, as are all the essentials of the Church.” (True Christian Religion 165)

“Make me to know Your ways, O Jehovah; teach me Your paths. Make me to tread in Your truth, and teach me, for You are the God of my salvation; for You do I wait all the day.”
(Psalm 25:4-5)

“But they asked, ‘On what subject?’ It was said, ‘On the Lord the Savior, and on the Holy Spirit.’ But when they began to meditate on these subjects they were not in a state of enlightenment; therefore they prayed, and a light then flowed down from heaven; and first the back part of their heads were lighted up, then their temples and at last their faces.”
(True Christian Religion 188)



Meditate In The Field

“And Isaac went out to meditate in the field as it turned toward evening; and he lifted up his eyes and saw, and behold there were camels coming. And Rebekah lifted up here eyes, and saw Isaac, and she alighted from off the camel.” (Genesis 24:63-64)

“*And Isaac went out to meditate in the field.* That this signifies the state of the rational in good, is evident from the representation of Isaac, as being the Divine rational; and from the signification of ‘meditating in the field,’ as being its state in good; for meditating is a state of the rational when it applies the mind intently; but a ‘field’ is doctrine and the things of doctrine; thus the things of the church as to good; hence came the ancient form of expression, ‘to meditate in the field,’ denoting to cogitate in good; which is the act of a man not married, when thinking about a wife.”

(Arcana Coelestia 3196)

“They who are not in the affection of truth from good, and from this in the desire to be wise, are blinded rather than enlightened when they read the Word, for they are not in the light of heaven.” (Arcana Coelestia 9382)



“There are some who are in doubt before they deny, and there are some who are in doubt before they affirm. They who are in doubt before they deny are they who incline to a life of evil; and when this life carries them away, then insofar as they think of the matters in question they deny them. But they who are in doubt before they affirm are they who incline to a life of good; and when they suffer themselves to be bent to this by the Lord, then insofar as they think about those things so far they affirm.”

(Arcana Coelestia 2568)

“As regards the renunciation of the world, many people believe that renouncing the world and living by the spirit rather than the flesh means rejecting worldly things, principally riches and honors, and going about continually meditating piously on God, salvation and everlasting life, spending one's time in prayer, reading the Word and religious books, and also mortifying oneself. But these things are not renouncing the world. It is rather loving God and the neighbor; and God is loved by leading a life in accordance with His commandments, and the neighbor is loved by doing services for him. So in order to receive the life of heaven, a person has to live fully in the world, and engage in offices and business there. A life withdrawn from worldly things is a life of thought and faith divorced from a life of love and charity. Such a life destroys the will to do good and the doing of good to the neighbor; and when this is destroyed, spiritual life is like a house with no foundations, which in course of time either sinks into the ground, or opens up gaping cracks, or totters until it collapses.”

(New Jerusalem And Its Heavenly Doctrine 126)

“There are those who are in a life of piety and in no life of charity who meditate piously, and thereby affect sanctity. These also study the Word, and the doctrine of the Church, but only for the sake of self....They also appear as holy in external form, but, still, they have had no life of charity....In a word, they live for themselves and not for others.” (Spiritual Experiences 5070)

Forming A Conscience Through Meditation

“With the person of the church, Conscience is formed by means of truths of faith from the Word, or from doctrine drawn from the Word, according to the reception of these in the heart. For when a person knows the truths of faith and apprehends them in his own way, and afterward wills them and does them, a Conscience is then being formed in him.” (Arcana Coelestia 9113)

Receiving Truth Used In Temptation Through Meditation

“With all who are in temptations there flows in truth from the Lord, which rules and governs the thoughts and raises up the sufferers whenever they fall into doubts and even into despair. This governing truth is that truth and such truth as they have learned from the Word or from doctrine, and have confirmed in themselves. Other truths are indeed at such times also called to mind, but they do not govern the interiors....

It is not this truth itself, but the affection of it, by which the Lord governs those who are in temptations; for the Divine flows only into those things which are of the affection. The truth which is implanted and rooted in a man's interiors is implanted and rooted by affection, and not at all without affection; and the truth which has been implanted and rooted by affection, clings there, and is recalled by affection; and when this truth is so recalled, it presents the affection that is conjoined with it, which is the person's reciprocal affection. As such is the case with the person who is in temptations, therefore no one is admitted into any spiritual temptation until he reaches adult age, and has thus become imbued with some truth by which he can be governed; otherwise he sinks under the temptation, and then his latter state is worse than the first.” (Arcana Coelestia 5044)

Nunc Licet

“The religion of the Christian world has closed up the understanding, and faith alone has sealed it; for both of these have placed around themselves like an iron wall the dogma that theological matters are transcendent and cannot therefore be reached by any exercise of rationality, and that they are for the blind, not for those that see. In this way the truths that teach what spiritual liberty is have been hidden.” (Divine Providence 149)

“There was seen a round temple, the roof of which was crown-shaped, its walls continuous windows of crystal, its door of a pearly substance. In it there was a pulpit, on which was the Word enveloped in a sphere of light. In the center of the temple was a sanctuary, before which was a veil, at that time raised, where stood a cherub waving a sword in his hand. . . . Above the gate there was this inscription, Now it is permitted;



which signified, that now it is permitted to enter understandingly into the mysteries of faith. . . . Because the dogmas of the New Church are all from the Word, it is permitted to enter into these with the understanding, because they are continuous truths from the Word, and also shine before the understanding. This was what is meant by the writing above the gate, Now it is permitted, and by the veil of the sanctuary being raised, within which the cherub stood. After this there was brought to me a paper from an infant who was an angel in the third heaven, on which was written, Enter hereafter into the mysteries of the Word which has been heretofore shut up; for the particular truths therein are so many mirrors of the Lord.” (True Christian Religion 508)

NUNC LICET



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