

## Small Group Lesson for March 21, 2010

Bii Fit: MEDITATION

### SMALL GROUP STUDY

**Prepare for the Word** (Leaders, take about 15 minutes for this section.)

Remember, Eastern meditation/New Age meditation is virtually the opposite of Christian meditation. The first is an emptying out of self, and looking for a god of another kind (which leaves the soul vulnerable). What we are talking about is not emptying ourselves, but filling up. We invite the Holy Spirit to come and work within us – teaching, cleansing, comforting, and rebuking. We also surround ourselves with the strong light of Christ to protect us from any influences not of God. Meditation gives us the wondrous and glorious opportunity to dwell completely on the goodness and perfection of our Lord. He wants you and me to be in communion with Him so that we can learn His will, realize His purpose, believe His promises, see His work and imitate His way for us.

**Individual Meditation:** Meditation is simply learned by practicing.

In the midst of a busy ministry, Jesus chose to withdraw from the people/crowds to be alone. Choose at least one of these scriptures: Matthew 4:1-11, 14:23, Mark 1:35, 6:31, or Luke 6:12. As you meditate on this scripture, make notes on what you think Jesus did during those important quiet times. Share your notes with your group when you meet.

“What happens in meditation is that we create the emotional and spiritual space which allows Christ to construct an inner sanctuary in the heart.” Richard Foster

**Group Meditation** – (One person should lead the group through a meditation. This allows everyone else in the group to do the activity without losing concentration on the directions.)

**“This is the day that the Lord has made. I will rejoice and be glad in it”**

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Leader only (italics are the directions for you to follow; quotes are what you are to say specifically)

- 1. Ask everyone to get comfortable – sit up straight but relaxed. Close their eyes and concentrate on your instructions.*
- 2. Read the above scripture four times, but really emphasize the underlined part of the sentence each time, which will be different for each reading. Pause between each reading.*
- 3. “Take a deep breath in ..... exhale.” Repeat.*

4. "Silently repeat the meditation 4 times in time with your breathing." (*Remind them: This is the day that the Lord has made. I will rejoice and be glad in it.*) Allow time.
5. "Take another deep cleansing breath ... and exhale."
6. "Ask God to make these words alive in you today."
7. *Close with prayer to include Thanking God for His divine love, guidance, and protection.*
8. "Open you eyes. Does anyone have any comments

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Another popular meditation style is **Lectio Divina**, which can be very personal and prayerful reading of Scripture, or it can be done in a small group. Let's try it.

Once again, one person should take leadership and guide the group through the steps. Three readers are needed. They should pass the same Bible or read from the same translation.

1. *Prepare by centering yourselves in God's presence. Breathe gently. **Bookend One.** Open with a word of prayer asking God to still your noises and prepare you to hear His voice.*
2. **Step One – Reading.** *Have the first reader read the passage. Tell the group that the Scripture will be read again. Tell them to listen for phrases or words that capture their attention. Then, have the same reader read it again more slowly. Ask the group to share the phrases or words that popped out at them. Each one should write their own response here:*
3. **Step Two – Reflecting.** *Tell the group to pay attention to the image or feeling that arises from the word or word mentioned before. The second reader reads the passage again. Write your image or feeling here and then speak it to the group.*
4. **Step Three – Responding.** *Ask the group to be aware of how you experience God around your image or feeling as it relates to your phrase or word. Listen and respond, by writing your thoughts, after you meditate on the image, feeling, word or phrase after this last reading.*
5. **Step Four – Resting/receiving.** *Commune alone with God during an extended silence. The leader concludes this time by speaking "Amen".*
6. **Bookend Two.** *Break into groups of two and share with each other how you are going to implement what God has pointed out; covenant to contact each other this week to see how you are doing.*

How can we pray for you?