

L E S S O N 1

THE SECRET OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

What is the secret to Christian living? From the list below, circle the answer you think is the key to the entire Christian life.

Witnessing	Baptism	Faithfulness
Obedience	Salvation	Studying the Word
Yielding to God	Renewing the mind	Attending church
Memorizing the Word	Loving others	Separation from the world
Being holy	Loving God	Glorifying God

- The correct choice is: _____

In order to understand this, let's examine three key words.

1. Transformation

- Note Romans 12:1–2. List three actions the believer is asked to take in this passage.
 - _____ a living sacrifice
 - Be _____ to this world
 - Be _____ by renewing the mind

What does “transformation” mean? This word in the Greek is *metamorphoo* (me-tah-mor-fó-o), from which we get our word *metamorphosis*. It is a combination of two Greek words: *meta* and *morpho*. These words mean the following.

- *Meta*: _____
- *Morpho*: _____

We see metamorphosis when a caterpillar becomes a butterfly. This is transformation.

- Metamorphosis is found three times in the New Testament.
 - _____
 - _____
 - _____
- In each case it refers to an _____ change.

Thus, the transformation Romans 12:2 is talking about is an *inward* activity that takes place in a believer that changes him into the very image of Christ. And this transformation can *only* take place by renewing the mind.

2. Renewing

What is “renewing the mind”?

- “Renewing the mind” means _____ or to _____.
- The Christian life is a _____.

On the other hand, if we can develop the mind of Christ, we will have consistent victory over Satan. Once our minds are remade so that we think like Christ and act like Christ, we will have victory in the Christian life. This is why Paul said, “Let this *mind* be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus” (Phil. 2:5).

How do we renew our minds?

- Psalm 1:1–3 and Psalm 119:9–15 make this perfectly clear. The key to victory is _____.

3. Meditation

Meditation produces dedication, but a lack of it produces stagnation.

- Meditation is a _____ process through which _____ is _____, _____, and _____.

The Benefits of Meditation

Physical/Material Blessings

- Proverbs 4:7–8 _____
- Joshua 1:8 _____
- Psalm 1:1–3 _____

Mental Blessings

- Romans 12:2 _____
- Isaiah 55:8–9 _____
- Psalm 119:97–98 _____

The phrase *be all you that can be* is a favorite expression of the U.S. Army. But it certainly should be the motto of those in God's army. Teens, God has great blessings stored up for you, and He will unload them on those who discipline themselves to daily meditate in His Word. As you meditate, God will pour out His blessings upon you, and you will truly be "all that you can be."

LESSON 2

HAPPINESS IS . . .

When is a person really happy? What actually brings happiness? Read Psalm 1. The word *blessed* in verse 1 means “happy.” Thus, Psalm 1 is a description of a truly happy person.

The Happy Man Doesn’t... (1:1)

- Live according to the _____
- Go the places _____ go
- Sit with those who _____ of the truth

Three Steps Downward

The following steps, when taken in reverse order, reveal a downward progression:

1. _____ with the wrong crowd. We’re not running with them—only sitting with them in church.
2. _____ with the wrong crowd. We stand with them outside of church and school. We’re not doing what they do—we’re just hanging around them, that’s all.
3. _____ with the wrong crowd. At the point, we do what they do. We’re now walking in their counsel.

John Bunyan's Nine Steps to Backsliding

1. Preoccupied in our _____
2. Neglect private _____
3. _____ warm _____
4. _____ of Christian activities
5. Become increasingly _____
6. Start _____ with the _____
7. Develop _____
8. Participate in _____
9. Hearts grow _____

The Happy Man Does... (1:2)

What About You?

We will finish looking at Psalm 1 in our next lesson. Let's conclude by noticing further effects of failing to meditate in God's Word.

- It is the first step to a _____.
- It is _____ (for anything that gets the focus of my mind off God is an idol).
- It robs us of _____.
- It may _____ us for life.

A "reprobate" is one who has been "given up" by the Lord. We read about him in Romans 1:28. When he gets to this point, his heart has become so hard that

nothing will bring him to repentance. Teens, beware! It is dangerous to get your mind preoccupied with things other than the Lord and His Word.

Where are you in your Christian life? Are you delighting in the Word and meditating in it day and night? Or are you somewhere along the nine steps toward a reprobate mind? If you are anywhere on these nine steps, *stop immediately!* Look where they lead. It can and will happen to you!

At-Home Bible Study

This is a continuation of our study of the fourteen benefits of meditation. In Lesson 1, we noted three physical/material benefits (or blessings) and three mental benefits. Now we are ready to consider three emotional benefits and two volitional benefits.

Read the verses below and write the blessing they promise one who meditates on God in the Word and in providences.

Emotional Benefits

- Psalm 94:19; 119:49 _____
David is praying that God would help him think (meditate) on Scripture. Why? Because he finds comfort and strength in the Word. Thus meditation on God's Word is a great tonic for discouragement and sadness.
- Psalm 119:50, 52, 92 _____
When David was discouraged, he would review all the ways God had worked in men's lives in the past. When his enemies seemed to be prospering and gaining the upper hand—though they were wicked, and he was godly—he would review God's past judgments against wicked men. Then he would take heart, for he knew that eventually God would give him the victory and judge the sinner.
- Psalm 119:28 _____
The kind of strength David is talking about is emotional. He had physical strength, but his spirit was sagging. Facing affliction and enemies, he needed emotional strength. The practice of meditation in the Word gave him the strength he needed to continue serving God.

Volitional Benefits

Volitional benefits are benefits that affect our wills. Remember, we take the Word, in meditation, through our minds, our emotions, and our wills. As it invades each of these areas of our souls, it has a distinct effect. We now consider two effects meditation in the Word has upon our wills.

- Psalm 119:45 _____
 - Sin controls us—we don't control it. Even though we often boast, "I can quit this sin any time I get ready," we really can't. In fact, John 8:34 says that we are slaves to sin. Thus, we don't cling to sin; it hangs on to us like a boa constrictor wrapping itself around its victim. How does one break this awful death-hug? The key is in the first phrase of Psalm 101:3. What is it? _____

 - Thus, the person who occupies his or her mind with the world becomes a servant of sin. He loses his willpower. And though he may beg to be released and try a hundred ways to quit his sin, he finds himself helpless to do so. His will is enslaved by sin.
 - Now we come back to Psalm 119:45. How does he free himself?

 - As a person occupies his mind and fills his thoughts with God's Word, the hold sin has on him will gradually weaken and finally fall off, freeing his will once more to choose that which is right.

- Psalm 40:8; 119:133 _____

Every Christian wants to know God's will. Yet, if we meditate in His Word, we will find ourselves automatically in His will. We enjoy doing His will.

LESSON 3

THE HAPPY MAN AND THE UNHAPPY MAN

The Happy Man (1:3)

Psalm 1:1–3 tells us (1) what the happy man does not do, (2) what the happy man does, and (3) what the happy man is. In Lesson 2, we looked at the first two points. Now let's turn our attention to what the happy man is like.

He Is Like a _____

Why does God use such a description?

- A tree speaks of _____ and _____.

Isaiah 61:3 calls God's people "trees (oaks) of righteousness, the planting of the Lord."

Note what God calls those who do not spend time in His Word:

- "_____ (infants) who are _____ around by waves and blown about by every wind of doctrine" (Eph. 4:14).

He Is _____

The central idea in "planted" is seen in the word itself—PLANted. When something is planted, it is placed there by someone who has a plan or purpose for the plant.

Thus, God has special plans for those who meditate in the Word.

He Is by the _____

"Water" represents the Word of God.

The only way we can grow is to plant ourselves near God’s Word every day and draw water from it.

He _____

A tree has certain priorities about what it does with the water it “drinks.”

- _____
- _____
- _____

Fruit is the last priority of the tree and is only produced when there is a great excess of water.

What do we learn from this? That for us as believers to produce fruit, we must get a lot of God’s water (the Word).

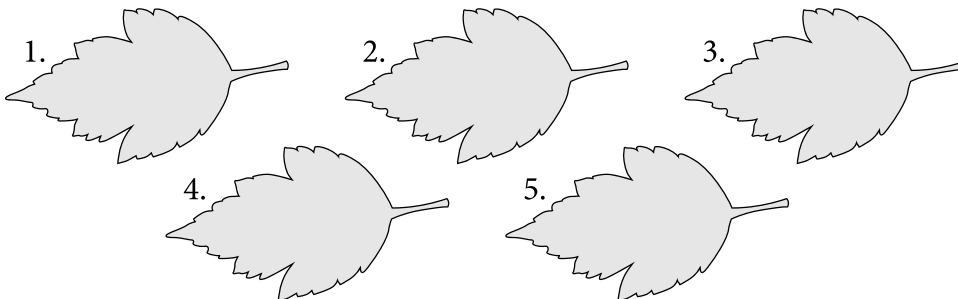
Only if we spend enough time in the Word to live and grow—and then spend more time in the Word—do we get enough to bear fruit. This why we must be “planted by the rivers of water.”

His _____ *Will Not* _____

What do the leaves picture? Our _____.

Leaves are the outward indication of the inward health of a tree.

Like a tree, a Christian teen has leaves that show how spiritually healthy he or she is. Let’s look at the Christian’s leaves.



He Will Be _____

That's quite a promise. No matter what this person does, God will cause it to be successful. Meditation is the key to success in everything you do in life. Do you believe it? Will you try it?

The Unhappy Man (1:4–6)

Who is the “unhappy man”? He is the man described in Psalm 1:4–6. He is the opposite of the happy man in verses 1–3. Note the first phrase in verse 4:

- “The ungodly are not so”—What does that mean? _____

Therefore, the man of verses 4–6 is not blessed (happy). That means he...

_____ *According to the* _____ *of*
the _____

If the “happy” man of verses 1–3 does not walk in the philosophy of the world, and the man of verses 4–6 “is not so,” then he evidently does walk in the world’s philosophy. He is living his life by the rules and philosophy of the world.

He Has _____ *in the Word*

He Is like the _____

Chaff is the thick husks that surround a grain of wheat—similar to the paper-thin coating around a peanut. When men “winnow” wheat, they toss it into the air so that the wind will blow the tiny husks (chaff) away, and the heavier grains of wheat will fall to the ground.

The man who does not meditate is therefore not stable. He will not “stand” in the judgment but will be blown away.