

# 57 Right-Brained Methods For Meditating on God's Word

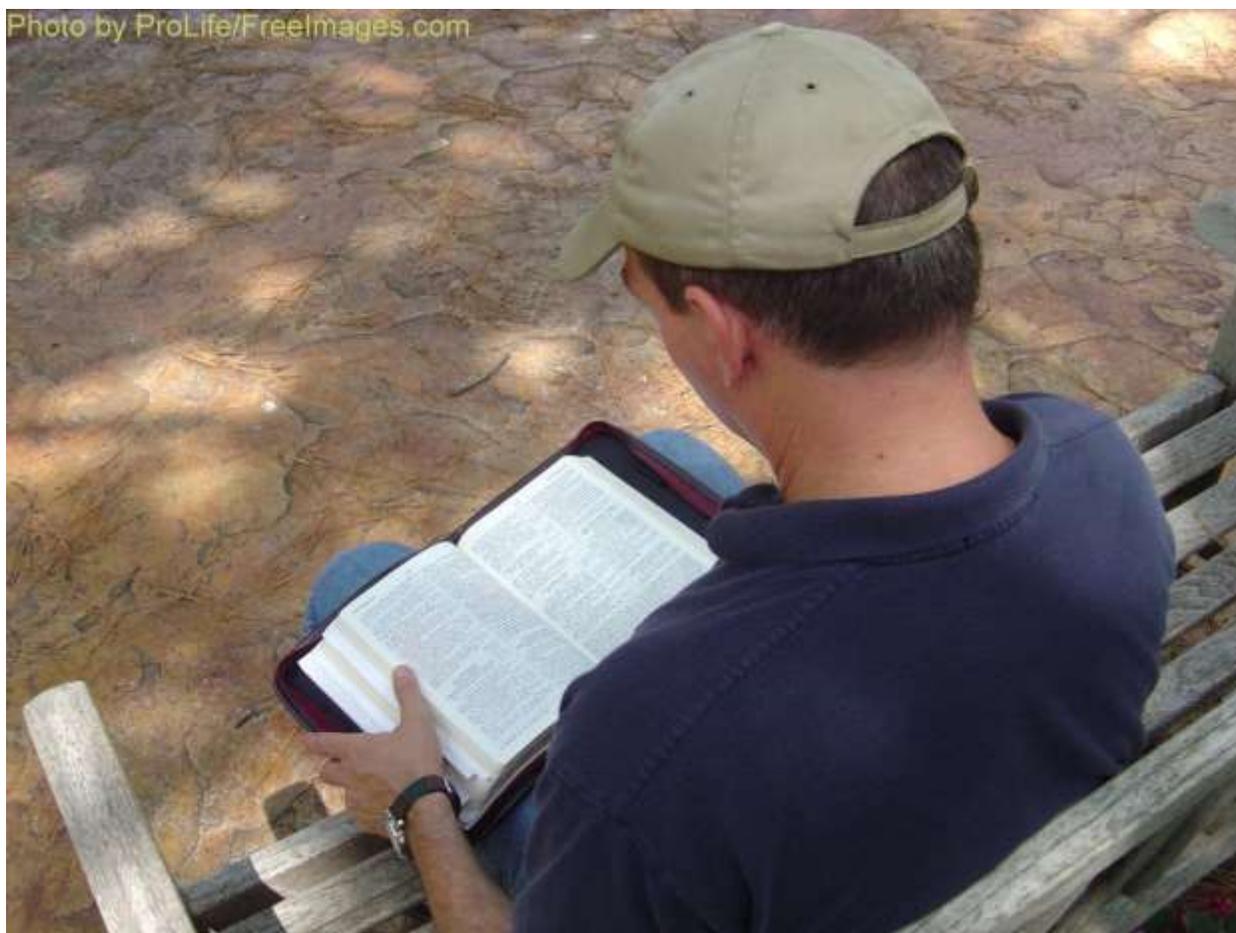


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**L**et's get into some practical ways we can meditate on God's Word without doing anything scary or uncomfortable. You'll find that biblical meditation is more fun and freeing than your preconceived ideas allow, so set them aside. Let's explore and play.



## *Paraphrase It*

Let's start with an easy one. When you read a Bible passage, take time to study it a bit. Remember? Follow your curiosity on at least three things. Then work with the text on a more personal level by simply writing out the passage in your own words. By all means, follow the original flow and meaning, but say it the way you would say it. You might find it helpful to imagine yourself telling it to a friend in a coffee shop.

Write it down. You could work your way through a book of the Bible (start with a small one like Philippians) and gradually write out your own paraphrase bit by bit. This simple act is more powerful than you might think. By putting it in your own words, you've made it personal. It puts you a step closer to experiencing it.



## Personalize It

Another way of paraphrasing a Bible verse or passage is to insert your name in it and change it to first person “I” instead of “you” or “they.”

Using your favorite Bible translation, substitute pronouns to put yourself in the text. Or combine personalization with the act of paraphrasing the text into your own words. Sometimes the personalization seems awkward, but it can reinforce ideas for us in a very personal way.

Verse: “Don’t be afraid, for I am with you. Don’t be discouraged, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you. I will hold you up with my victorious right hand” (Isaiah 41:10).

Personalized: “Christy, don’t be afraid, for I am with you. Don’t be discouraged, Christy, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you. I will hold you up with my victorious right hand.”

Verse: “For he has not ignored or belittled the suffering of the needy. He has not turned his back on them, but has listened to their cries for help” (Psalm 22:24).

Personalized: “God has not ignored or belittled my suffering. He has not turned his back on me, but has listened to my cries for help.”

Verse: “Love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous or boastful or proud or rude. It does not demand its own way. It is not irritable, and it keeps no record of being wronged. It does not rejoice about injustice but rejoices whenever the truth wins out. Love never gives up, never loses faith, is always hopeful, and endures through every circumstance” (1 Corinthians 13:4-7).

Personalized: “[When I am filled with love] I am patient and kind. I am not jealous or boastful or proud or rude. I do not demand my own way. I am not irritable, and I keep no record of being wronged. I do not rejoice about injustice but rejoice whenever the truth wins out. I never give up, never lose faith, am always hopeful, and endure through every circumstance.”



## *Imagine It*

After some academic study of the Bible, I put away the reference books and sit back to imagine the people, places, and events I've just studied.

Of course, you need some study to inform your imagination. Otherwise, you're just making up things that aren't true. I'm encouraging you to take your factual study a bit further. Take time to lift it out of the pages of a Bible dictionary and into your mind's eye. It becomes a real place in your mind, not just an external fact you've learned.



## Tell It

After you've imagined the people and places, it's time to put them in motion. Visualize yourself as one of the characters in the story. Putting yourself into the action makes it personal. It connects you at a deep level with the reality of the situation.

Write it out, if you want. It's a wonderful way to make the Bible come alive—and it's a technique I used in two previous books to help readers engage with the Bible character and understand the circumstances of his or her life better. This is especially helpful with people like Jeremiah, whose personal story is scattered throughout fifty-two chapters and broken up by long sections of prophecy.

After using your Bible dictionary and concordance to find all references to Jeremiah, you can piece together the events of his life. This is study.

Then, retell the events of his life as a story. This is meditation.

It takes you deeper.

It engages the senses.

It makes it believable.

It makes it personal.

When you see yourself in the story and put yourself in someone's shoes, you see how God interacted with this person. This awareness helps you interact with God's truth in a personal way.

Once you've told the story, try changing characters. Tell the same story from a different point of view to see what happens. Often you can gain additional insights because there is truth and significance hidden in each point of view. In my book, *Best Friends with God: Falling in Love with the God Who Loves You*, I told the story of the Prodigal Son from the older brother's perspective. Changing the point of view can bring new insights to the forefront.

Try it a third time with a different character and compare the results. Have fun engaging the Bible. This is meditation.



## Write It

Journaling isn't for everyone. I'm a writer and I don't journal very often. At least I don't often write in a journal that I keep for that purpose. However, I frequently write things out as a way of processing information. Afterwards I throw it away or hit *delete*. Sometimes I struggle or grapple with what I'm learning and writing helps me sort it out. Sometimes I'm just feeling introspective and use writing as a way to reflect on what I'm learning from the Bible.

Writing is another way of meditating on God's Word and it can take a variety of forms. So don't let the idea of journaling keep you away from the benefits of writing about what you learn.

If pages of handwritten text don't appeal to you, you can keep a journal on your computer. And blogging can also be a form of journaling about what you learn and experience in God's Word over a period of time.

Or maybe you're more poetic. Writing poetry is a wonderful way to process what you learn from your study of the Bible. Poetry makes it personal. It attaches significance and emotion to truth. Poetry frames the truth in a beautiful way that allows you to examine it from different angles. And sometimes it will punch you in the gut with the impact of a truth seen in a new way or in a new context.

Haiku is very popular (especially on Twitter) and many people will meditate on a verse of the Bible by thinking about it until they can condense it down to a pithy poem: five syllables on the first line; seven syllables on the second line; and five syllables on the third line.

Haiku is a marvelous example of meditating on God's Word because it captures the core meaning of a verse and paraphrases it in a concise and memorable way. It engages the mind in a way that makes the truth personal. If you are talented in this way (I'm not), then you are engaging the text beyond mere study and coming closer to experiencing it deeply and personally.



## *Draw It*

You don't have to be a professional artist to draw. Take time to doodle or draw a picture that captures a scene from the Bible; conveys a biblical theme or truth; or expresses a biblical truth in a contemporary setting. Often a drawing can express something more deeply than written words. Or it can convey something we may not realize until we see how we portray it.

Journaling can include drawings as well as written text. I keep an art journal and use collage techniques along with drawing and writing out Scriptures or personal thoughts about my spiritual life and growth.

When I began keeping an art journal, I was thrilled to find it meaningful and meditative. I can draw a little, but I supplemented it with collage techniques and written journaling to create pages that were an act of meditating on my life circumstances or Bible passages. As I was contemplating how to portray each concept, I would think and pray about it.

This is an important kinesthetic principle: having something to do with your hands helps your mind stay focused longer. So the art gave me the ability to spend a larger amount of time thinking about a theme than I would have otherwise.

The act of creating is very personal and it gets to the heart of meditating. In fact, creating may be one of the purest forms of meditating.



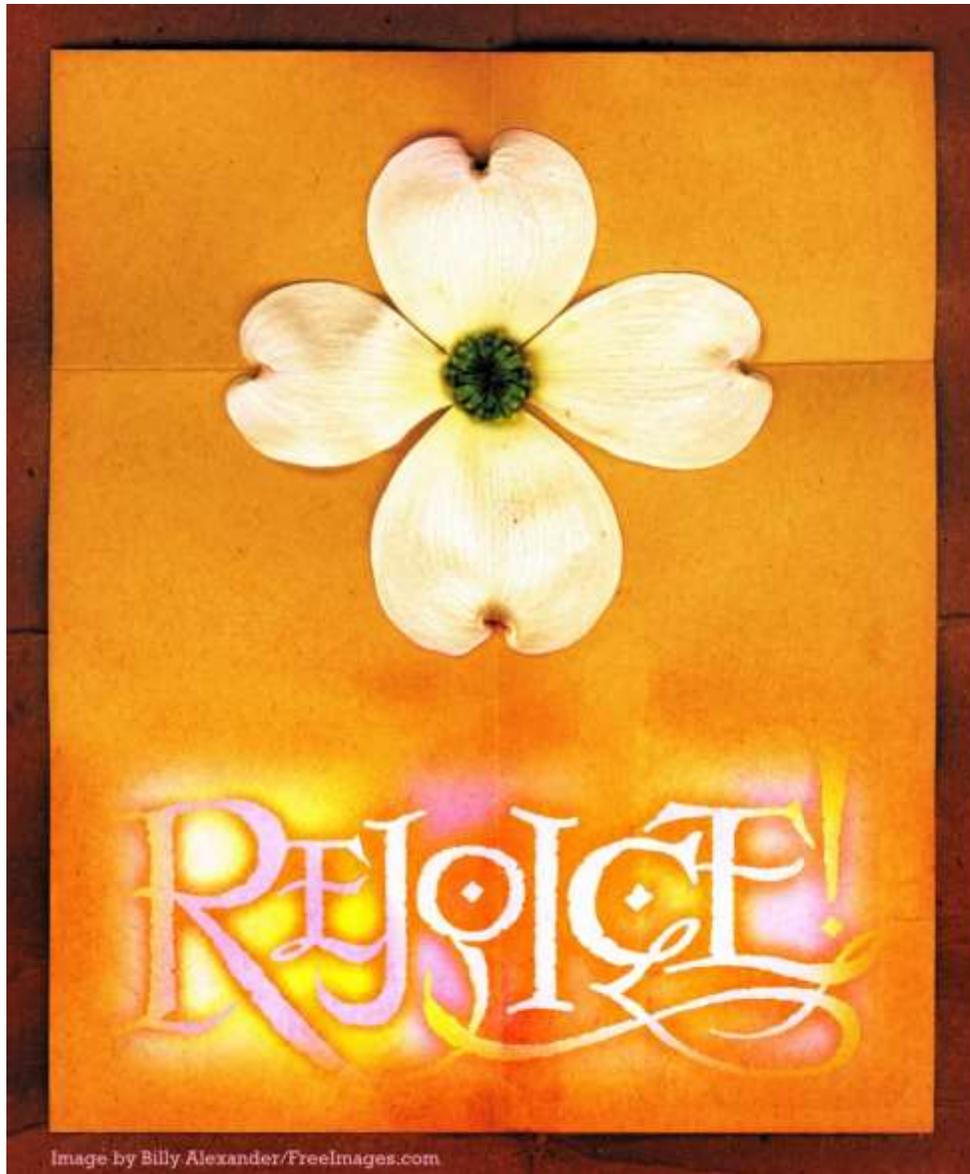
## Create It

Art and music are wonderful ways to spend time meditating on God’s Word. The act of creating allows us to process information in a very holistic way. It involves thinking, creating, and the hands-on feel of doing the art. Artists enjoy the tactile aspects of creating because it involves the senses—seeing, hearing, touching, smelling, and sometimes tasting. And we know from research that the more senses you use, the more information you are likely to retain. So, here’s another example of how right-brain activities can help us absorb the left-brain information.

Musicians may enjoy expressing biblical truth in song, or by writing music that conveys the thrust of a passage or story (even without words).

Art takes many forms. Even if you don’t consider yourself an artist, you might still find ways to “create” as a way of processing what you learn in the Bible.

What’s your thing? Do you enjoy scrapbooking? Then create a scrapbook or art journal with each page visually expressing a truth from God’s Word. Make a scrapbook that tells a story or biography from the Bible. Or make a scrapbook that creates a visual re-telling of a book of the Bible. Be creative. Engage. Enjoy.



### *Post It*

You can use scrapbooking, rubberstamping, or any other artistic technique to create cards with Bible verses. Post them on the fridge or mirror to help you remember a biblical truth over time. Taking time to create a card with a Bible verse gives you a great start at memorizing the verse, too, because you are thinking about it while you are creating it, plus you can continue to see and remember it in the days ahead. This kind of information processing is more natural than rote memorization, anyway.

You can also meditate on God's Word by making cards to give away as gifts. This is a double blessing because you spent time meditating on the verse while you created it. Then you can bless someone else with it. Share what you have learned.



## Tech It

If you're more of a techy person, you might enjoy meditating on God's Word in that way, using your particular skills. If your computer is your artist's canvas, then create that way.

Use graphic design to visually portray what you learn in the Bible. It could be a still image, an animation, or a full multi-media presentation. It could be a simple VLOG (video log) of you talking about what you've learned or a computer-generated animation presenting a Bible verse or message. The possibilities are endless and I'm often amazed at what talented people are able to create with technology today.



## 48 Ways to Meditate on Scripture

Need more ideas? I've compiled a list of 48 below, but there is no limit. Apply your own creative interests to the Word of God to see what you come up with. If you're thinking it looks like a list of craft projects and creative ventures, you're right.

Working on a craft project gives our minds time to think about the Bible passage, deciding the best approach for expressing it in our own way. It builds in the time we need to meditate and it feels so much more natural than staring at a page of Scripture and trying to maintain our focus. It also engages the kinesthetic principles of maintaining our focus by coupling it with a physical activity.

Consider which of these methods appeal to you.

1. Write a story.
2. Write an essay.
3. Draw a picture.

4. Make a collage.
5. Make a “ransom” note.
6. Create a scrapbook page.
7. Rubber stamp a Scripture card.
8. Make a bookmark.
9. Create a graphic design.
10. Make a video.
11. Sculpt with clay.
12. Take photos that capture the essence of the passage.
13. Tell the story from a different point of view.
14. Write the story in the first person.
15. Write the text in your own words.
16. Write it as a prayer.
17. Write a song.
18. Design a book cover for the text.
19. Write it like a newspaper story.
20. Write a news headline for the text.
21. Put the text in your art journal.
22. Use mixed media to convey the idea.
23. Express the emotion of the passage through sounds.
24. Express the emotion of the passage through scents.
25. Express the emotion of the passage through tastes.
26. Express the emotion of the passage through visuals.
27. Express the emotion of the passage through textures.
28. Use needlecrafts to express the text.
29. Do a physical act of obedience.
30. Write a skit.
31. Express the idea through dance.
32. Write out the passage and color-code key words.
33. Construct a diorama.
34. Create a shadowbox display.
35. Create the scene in miniatures.
36. Build the scene in Legos.

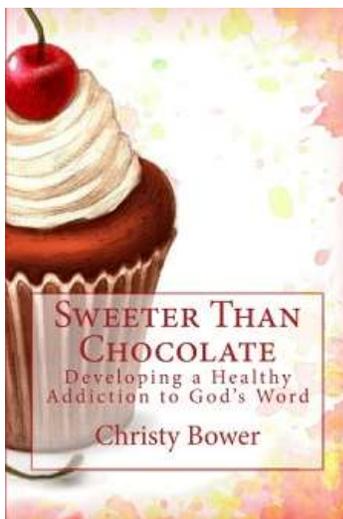


37. Make a crossword puzzle with clues from the text.
38. Create a word search using key words.
39. Write a poem.
40. Write a verse as haiku.
41. Cook a recipe that relates to the text.
42. Create a costume or mask of a character.
43. Record a dramatic reading of the text.
44. Record a dramatic re-telling of the text.
45. Make a poster.
46. Design a banner.
47. Draw a map of the place.
48. Creatively write Scripture all over your driveway with sidewalk chalk.

## Own It

The point is: whatever you already enjoy, use it as a way of thinking about and engaging with God's Word because this is where we make it personal. Using the imagination and the senses allows us to process the information in a way that moves it from knowledge toward experience. But we won't fully experience the truth of the Bible until we put it into practice, which is what we will talk about in the next chapter.

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This is an excerpt from “Chapter Six – Chocolate Swirls: Meditating on God’s Word,” [Sweeter Than Chocolate: Developing a Healthy Addiction to God’s Word](#), © 2014 Christy Bower. If you found this excerpt useful, you’ll want to [purchase](#) the book so you can read it in its entirety.

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