



Pocket Meditations



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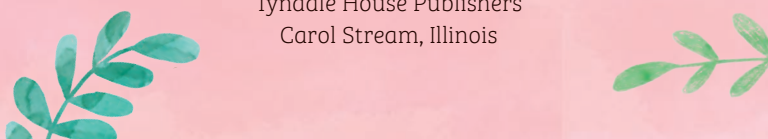
Pocket Meditations



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Introduction

WHETHER YOU'RE NEW TO THE BIBLE or have been immersing yourself in its message for years, the same wonderful truth applies: You will reap eternal benefits each time you meditate on its timeless wisdom.


As you begin your journey through *Pocket Meditations*, keep in mind that we all meditate on something at various points throughout each day. To meditate is to focus your thought and attention on one particular matter. For some, it might mean contemplating schedules or agendas. For others, it may involve thinking deeply about current worries or getting bogged down with past regrets or failures.

While the word *meditation* has some unfortunate baggage these days, the practice is actually essential to the Christian faith. We must think deeply about God's






Word—reflecting on what it says about him and pondering what it reveals about us and our world. We cannot internalize the truths of God unless we slow down and ingest them.









The concept of meditation is mentioned throughout the Bible: Joshua said we should meditate on God's law "day and night" (Joshua 1:8). David prayed that his meditations would be pleasing to God (Psalm 19:14). Meditation is also mentioned in several psalms (48:9; 63:6; 119; 145:5).



What do you meditate on most often? How might your life be different if each day you chose to pause and meditate on God's Word? This book is designed to help you do that. Every page provides a well-known and inspirational passage from God's Word as well as a devotional thought to prompt you to meditate more deeply on its message.

Here are a few tips before you begin:

1. Read (and reread) each Bible passage *slowly*. God's Word cannot sink into your heart through skimming. Take a breath before you read, and then allow your mind to settle on each verse.
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2. Give yourself grace. It's hard to stay still and focused. That's why meditation is considered a discipline! If distractions arise, remind yourself that replacing old thoughts with new ones takes time. Let go of preoccupations as best you can in order to engage with the Scriptures.
 3. Remember that you are reading God's Word, which is "*alive and powerful*" (Hebrews 4:12, emphasis added). It always produces fruit. You may not feel any different in the moment, but trust that God will accomplish great work in you through these meditations.

God bless you as you think deeply about his Word, his character, and his presence in your life!



Genesis 1:1

*In the beginning God created
the heavens and the earth.*

The first five words of the Bible reveal so much to us about God: “In the beginning God created.” God’s Word begins by affirming that he existed before anything else and that he alone brought all things into existence. He didn’t use other materials to form the heavens and the earth; he created all things from nothing. This concept is almost impossible for us to grasp, yet it reminds us of his power, sovereignty, and wisdom. If God is able to speak all things into existence, how much more can he be trusted to handle the impossible areas in your own life?



Genesis 1:27

*God created human beings in his own image.
In the image of God he created them;
male and female he created them.*

To be created in God's image means we resemble God—in our ability to create, reason, rule over animals, and be in relationship. How amazing it is that God didn't create us to be his puppets but to resemble and represent him in this world! How often do you thank God for seeing you as worthy to share his image? Since God treasures you this much, surely he has something important for you to do in this world.



Psalm 1:1-3

Oh, the joys of those who do not follow the advice of the wicked, or stand around with sinners, or join in with mockers. But they delight in the law of the LORD, meditating on it day and night. They are like trees planted along the riverbank, bearing fruit each season. Their leaves never wither, and they prosper in all they do.

The book of Psalms begins by stressing the importance of obeying the law—God’s Word. This passage contrasts a life of delighting in the Word of God against a life of following one’s own way. Which most resembles your own? Do you come to Scripture for advice or rely solely on human wisdom? Does it seem that you are fruitful and thriving or dry and withering? Ask God for help in learning to love his Word as you continue through this devotional.



Genesis 18:14

Is anything too hard for the LORD?

Abraham, who was nearly one hundred years old, and his ninety-year-old wife, Sarah, were childless when God told Abraham the unexpected news that Sarah would finally have a child. Imagine living that long without seeing a deep desire of your heart come to fruition. Sarah's hope for a child had likely dwindled with each year that passed until at last she deemed it impossible, laughing at the prospect. But God responded, "Is anything too hard for the LORD?" These words combat despair, hopelessness, and pessimism. They remind us that God can do anything—yes, *anything*. God sees the desires of your heart. He knows the pain and helplessness you feel because of that impossible situation in your life. What might God want you to keep hoping for as you choose to trust him with the impossible?





Genesis 24:7

*The LORD, the God of heaven . . . will send
his angel ahead of you.*

Abraham decided to send his most trusted servant on a long journey to find a wife for his son Isaac. Before the servant left, Abraham told him, “God . . . will send his angel ahead of you.” God clearly showed his love and care for this servant by sending an angel ahead to help him on his journey. Do you long for this in your own life—someone to walk ahead of you to prepare your path? Whatever situation you are about to walk into, pray that God will send an angel ahead of you. Trust that he cares for you in the same way he cared for Abraham’s servant.

Genesis 50:20

*You intended to harm me,
but God intended it all for good.*

Abraham's great-grandson, Joseph, spoke these words to his brothers after enduring a long, painful history with them. They had plotted to kill him because he was their father's favorite child. Thankfully they changed their minds and sold him into slavery instead, yet they lied to their father about his fate. Years later, Joseph came face-to-face with his brothers again, but this time he was the one in power and chose to forgive them. After their father died, his brothers were still afraid of retribution from Joseph and fell down before him, begging for forgiveness. When Joseph answered them with the words in this passage, it demonstrated that God is able to use *anything*—even human sin—to bring about good. If you have been harmed, or if you have regretfully harmed another, take comfort in remembering this.

