

## CA 04 EMAW 04 THINKING WITH PURPOSE

(MUSIC THEME)

FOSTER: I like reading about Joshua in the Bible. Many of us are familiar with his declaration, "But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD," That is from Joshua 24, verse 15. But in Joshua chapter 1, he said something that is the focus of our conversation today. "Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful."<sup>1</sup>

Welcome to Champions Arise. I'm your host Foster Braun and I'm with Kent Darcie. Over the last couple of programs we've used some words that can be scary to some men: "Quiet time", "journaling", "memorization", and today we're going to discuss "meditation" and look at the power we can receive from meditating on the Bible. Men of God, we're going deeper so stay with us on Champions Arise.

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FOSTER: Kent, I have to be honest. When I think of meditation, I picture myself sitting on a mat with my arms folded across my chest and humming. When Joshua said, "Meditate on the Book of the Law day and night," that's not what was talking about was it?

KENT: No. Biblically, meditation is not clearing your mind. It's thinking with purpose. Proverbs 23 verse 7 says 'As a man thinks in his heart, so is he.' So **what** we meditate **on** is very important, because it will affect our beliefs and actions.

// Meditating on God's word takes memorization to the next level.

FOSTER: Explain to our listeners what you mean by taking memorization to the next level.

KENT: It is very important to memorize God's Word. However, if we aren't careful, it is easy to fill our minds with a bunch of words that have little or no meaning. An example of this would be, in school, our children will often memorize a lot of facts and definitions. But they memorize it to pass the test, not to change their lives.

In the same way, without meditation, the Scripture tends to stay in our minds, rather than touching our hearts, and changing our lives

FOSTER: I think I understand that, but what does digging deeper, or meditating look like?

KENT: For us, meditating is thinking with purpose. And Lonnie Berger in his book "Every Man a Warrior" encourages us to think with purpose in our quiet times by using the "Ask Questions Method". This method involves asking four questions when we are focusing on a verse. These four questions are:

1. is there a commandment to obey?
2. is there a promise to claim?
3. is there a sin to avoid? And
4. is there an application to make?

Let me repeat those.

1. is there a commandment to obey?
2. is there a promise to claim?
3. is there a sin to avoid? And
4. is there an application to make?

FOSTER: The “Ask Questions method” helps us to dig deeper?

KENT: Yes, and we’re going to look at these questions one by one to learn how to dig deeper. First, we need a scripture verse. Can you read Psalm 32 verse 8 please?

FOSTER: Sure. Psalm 32 verse 8: “I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you and watch over you.”

KENT: Can you read that one more time, just so we have it in our minds?

FOSTER: Psalm 32 verse 8: “I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you and watch over you.”

KENT: Thanks. When you are meditating on a verse like this, the first question to ask is: “Is there a command to obey?” And the amazing thing about God, His Holy Spirit, and His Word is that we can all receive different answers to this question. In this verse, God says, “I will instruct you. I will teach you. I will counsel you.” To me this verse is saying that I am commanded to receive God’s instruction, teaching, and counsel.

But, am I doing this? Guys hate reading instructions. We like to do things on our own.

FOSTER: Is that why we never ask for directions?

KENT: That might be part of it. But when I look at this verse and the command to receive God’s instruction and counsel, if I’m not doing that, I have to ask myself, is it pride? If so, that’s a problem.

Proverbs 16:18 says: “Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall.” [ESV]

Proverbs 16:5 says “Everyone who is arrogant in heart is an abomination to the LORD” [ESV]

In James 4 verse 6 it says, “God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble.”

We need to come humbly into His presence and take the answer God gives us to this question to heart.

FOSTER: I can see where asking the question and listening for the answer is very important. If you just joined us, this is Champions Arise. I’m Foster Braun and I’m speaking with Kent Darcie about the importance of meditating on God’s Word. Kent, I’m amazed that we gleaned so much from one question. What is the next question?

KENT: The first question was, is there a command to obey. The second question is: Is there a promise to be claimed? The answer is definitely yes. When we read, “I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you and watch over you.” [Psalm 32:8] we see God saying “I will” And when God says “I will,--He will...if we let Him. God will not force Himself on us. The promise is there, but it has to be claimed.

When we are at our job and we're struggling to complete a project or solve a problem, this promise can be claimed. When we are at home and trying to minister to our wife and kids when everything seems to be going wrong—this promise can be claimed. “I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you and watch over you.” Experiencing that truth in your quiet time, will take the scripture from just being in your head, to something that gives you hope, and strength, and direction throughout your day.

FOSTER: God's Word is powerful and it's available for whatever we might face.

KENT: That's right.

FOSTER: Ok. Let's move to the third question.

KENT: Just a reminder that these questions are used to help us meditate, to think with purpose, and to dig deeper in the scriptures we read in our daily quiet time. So we've asked the questions: is there a command to obey, and is there a promise to claim. The third question is, is there a sin to avoid?

In the scripture we are using as our example Psalm 32 verse 8. It reads: “I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you and watch over you.” We already looked at one possible sin we might be committing. That was pride—our not being willing to let God teach us and counsel us—or thinking we already know enough and don't need His help. But in another verse, the sin God might be addressing could be anger, or lust, or coveting, or unforgiveness, or whatever God shows us we need to deal with.

FOSTER: It sounds like this could be an important question.

KENT: It definitely is. Psalm 19 vs 12-13 says: “How can I know all the sins lurking in my heart? Cleanse me from these hidden faults. Keep your servant from deliberate sins! Don't let them control me. Then I will be free of guilt and innocent of great sin.”[NLT].

The reference to hidden sin in this verse reminds me of a situation I heard about.

There was a man named Dave who was discipling another man named Alan and teaching him about quiet times. For the first year Alan had daily quiet times, but then Alan bought a new apartment that needed a lot of repair. As a result, he would work all day and then go to do repair work at the apartment until midnight.

One morning when the two men met, Alan said, “I'm tired, I don't have my lesson done, I haven't been having my Quiet Times, I never see my kids, and my wife is mad too.” Here is a principle that Alan had forgotten: without meditation, without that daily quiet time, the scripture tends to stay in our minds, rather than actually touching our hearts and guiding our actions.

This story about Alan covers our fourth question too. Is there an application to make?

The scripture that encouraged Alan to change was Proverbs 23 verse 4 which says, “Do not wear yourself out to get rich; have the wisdom to show restraint.” Alan decided to apply that scripture to his life and that night after work he went home (instead of going to the apartment do repairs), hugged his wife, played with the kids, and started his next day with an extra-long Quiet Time.

FOSTER: That's very encouraging to see the meditation process in action. I'm sure Alan's wife and kids were very happy that he recommitted to having his daily quiet times.

KENT: And I'll bet Alan was a lot less stressed too. As men, we live busy lives, and we often think that we don't have time for daily quiet time with God. But the busier we are, the more we need it.

I've heard that, the great reformer, Martin Luther, had an extremely busy schedule, but he set aside 3 hours a day for prayer. He would skip ministry opportunities so that he could spend more time seeking God's face in prayer. He said, "If I'm going to serve my church well, I need to pray."

As Christian men, if we are going to serve God and our families we need to have our daily quiet times as well.

But there is one more question we need to ask when we are meditating on a scripture verse: 'Have I learned something new about God?'

FOSTER: What do you mean—something new about God? God doesn't change.

KENT: That's right, but we do. Our job may change. Our marriage goes through stages of having no kids to having kids, to having kids who are adults and out of the house. Maybe we have physical changes as we get older. The point is, God's word can help us to see God in a new way based on the situation we are in.

And I hope all this doesn't sound overwhelming. The important thing is to start and maintain your Quiet Time routine. It's one of those beneficial habits that will help us throughout our Christian life. We see this in the scripture we've been using as our example is, "I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you and watch over you,"

Maybe as a young man you saw God teach you how to be a better husband. Maybe later you experienced God as the counselor when you were trying to be a good dad to your teenage daughter.

You'll see the same scripture differently at different times, but meditating on scripture can reveal a wealth of information that can guide and transform our lives.

FOSTER: You know Kent, I am thankful for this program, because I am seeing meditating on God's word in a totally different way. But, before we finish, let's review what we've learned.

KENT: We learned that adding meditation to our quiet times enables us to dig deeper into God's word and this helps us to make the scriptures part of our lives, instead of just information we know.

To meditate on a verse we need to ask four questions:

1. is there a commandment to obey?
2. is there a promise to claim?
3. is there a sin to avoid? And
4. is there an application to make?

I know we covered a lot of ground today, but you can review these principles in Lesson 5 of Lonnie Berger's book, "Every Man a Warrior."

FOSTER: Thanks Kent. I think we can be excited that we don't have to go through life without answers. Because we have the manual for being a Godly man. It's called the Bible. Let's all

commit to having meaningful quiet times by adding meditation of Bible verses to our daily routine.

(MUSIC BUMPER IN) CLOSING

(MUSIC THEME OUT)

FOSTER: Thank you for listening to Champions Arise where men are equipped and strengthened to meet their God-given potential. Today we were challenged to “think with purpose” by meditating on God’s Word in our daily quiet times. The material for this program came from lesson #5 in the book “Every Man a Warrior,” by Lonnie Berger. His book is a great tool for individuals, small groups, or in a class at your church. For more information on his book or this program, visit our website at [www.championsarise.org](http://www.championsarise.org). Don’t miss the next program in this series as we wrestle over the phrase, “You do not have because you do not ask.” I’m Foster Braun with Kent Darcie. Thank you for listening to Champions Arise. May God mold you into the man He knows you can be.

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