

HOW TO GET AWAY WITHOUT LEAVING

(Selected Psalms)

What is your response when you hear the word, *meditation*?

Meditation is a means of encountering the Living Word in our inner sanctuary

- **CLEARING THE CLUTTER** (a prerequisite)

Christian meditation must not be confused with yoga, Eastern meditation, or transcendental meditation. For, unlike these disciplines, Christian meditation has nothing to do with emptying our minds. Christian meditation engages every part of us—our mind, our emotions, our imagination, our creativity and, supremely, our will. Christian meditation involves, not emptiness, but fullness. It means being attentive to God. The purpose of this attentiveness, this reflecting and this pondering is, among other things, to see ourselves in the light of God's revealed word. (Joyce Hugget, *Spiritual Classics*)

- **ENTERING THE SANCTUARY**

- **What is an *inner sanctuary*?**

Deep within us all there is an amazing inner sanctuary of the soul, a holy place, a Divine Center, a speaking Voice, to which we may continuously return. Eternity is at our hearts, pressing upon our time-torn lives, warming us with intimations of an astounding destiny, calling us home unto Itself. Let us explore together the secret of a deeper devotion, a more subterranean sanctuary of the soul. (Thomas Kelly, *A Testament of Devotion*)

- **How do we *enter* our inner sanctuary?**

What is here urged are internal practices and habits of the mind..., secret habits of unceasing orientation of the depths of our being about the Inward Light, ways of conducting our inward life so that we are perpetually bowed in worship, while we are also very busy in the world of daily affairs. (Thomas Kelly, *A Testament of Devotion*)

There is a way of ordering our mental life on more than one level at once. On one level we may be thinking, discussing, seeing, calculating, meeting all the demands of external affairs. But deep within, behind the scenes, at a profounder level, we may also be in prayer and adoration, song and worship and a gentle receptiveness to divine breathings. (Thomas Kelly, *A Testament of Devotion*)

- **We must first understand what it means to *meditate***

Hebrew *hagah*, can be translated “growl” or “chew” (cf. Isaiah 31:4)

- **We can enter the sanctuary through at least *four doors*: by meditating on...**

- God’s attributes (loyal love, mercy, grace, power, justice)

Within your temple, O God, we meditate on your unfailing love. (Ps 48:9)

- God’s activities (answered prayer, birth, salvation, transformation)

I will meditate on your wonders. (Ps 119:27)

- God’s Word (Scripture)

Oh, how I love your law! I meditate on it all day long. (Ps 119:97)

- God’s works (nature)

I meditate on all your works and consider what your hands have done. (Ps 143:5)

• ENCOUNTERING THE WORD

We meditate to give God’s words the opportunity to penetrate, not just our minds, but our emotions—the places where we hurt—and our will—the place where we make choices and decisions. We meditate [on the written word] to encounter the Living Word, Jesus himself. (Joyce Hugget, *Spiritual Classics*)

In our meditation we ponder the chosen text on the strength of the promise that it has something utterly personal to say to us for this day and for our Christian life, that it is not only God’s Word for the Church, but also God’s Word for us individually...God’s Word as God’s Word for us. The time of meditation does not let us down into the void and abyss of loneliness; it lets us be alone with the Word. And in so doing it gives us solid ground on which to stand and clear directions as to the steps we must take. (Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Life Together*)