



Leadership and the Liberal Arts

With Dr. Christopher Perrin

Lecture 9: Meditations

Outline:

Meditations by Marcus Aurelius

- This is a famous and great book on Stoic philosophy.
- What if we kept our own handbook as we matured and grew?
- Keep your own handbook of self-instruction about which you would like to continue to meditate.
- Read this book, take notes, and list the ideas already present in the Christian tradition and those that are in contrast with the Christian traditions.
- Important themes from Meditations:
 - He insists that we live according to nature. There is ordered beauty in the Cosmos by which we should live.
 - What does it mean to teach according to the nature of the student?
 - We need to be prudent. We need to know what is real, and then act accordingly.
 - Thinking about death leads Aurelius to despair. Do you face reality or do you turn yourself away from things that are unpleasant?
 - He is trying to be passionless, but there is a note of sadness rather than hope.
 - He likes to get to the principle of things.
 - He believes that opposition can turn into opportunity. Someone who is opposing you can also end up helping you.
 - Joseph said that you meant this for evil, but God mean it for good.
 - We should know our enemies. Understand them and know how they act. There is a place for overlooking offenses.
 - We should use deliberate reason. We should seek counsel. We should surround ourselves with virtuous friends. We should know ourselves.
 - He does not think there is such a thing as bad luck.
 - We should be prepared for when bad things happen.
 - He thinks that virtue is its own reward. To serve is good.
 - He thinks we must face grief and fear straight on.
 - There is a love of neighbor that Aurelius speaks to.
 - There is the careful study of nature and mankind.
 - Everything is subject to change.
 - He wants to liberty from passions.
 - Christians would deal with death differently, and there would be hope.