

A Doodle with a Purpose

We all doodle when we're distracted, but have you ever doodled for a specific purpose? Learn how to use doodling for stress relief and relaxation; establishing a prayerful focus on God's Word or just for having fun with pen and paper.

Is it really doodling if you doodle with intent? Traditionally doodling is thought of as a way for the unconscious mind to babble - to be distracted while we're doing something else. Doodling was done talking on the phone, in a boring meeting, waiting for the blue plate special in a diner and when early for an appointment. The result was elaborate patterns in the newspaper border or silly cartoons sketched on a placemat. Doodles were something to be thrown away.

"Doodling with Intent" is different. It is a deliberate drawing of repetitive patterns with the intention to bring about relaxation, spiritual meditation or a way to expand your creativity. This new form of doodling is becoming popular with people around the world and they have started giving it a name. Some include Zen Doodles, Zentangles™, Zen Dazzles or just plain old Doodling. (Don't be afraid of the word Zen, I'll explain more about it below.) This type of doodling might also involve creating shapes called Mandalas. The word Mandala is from the old Indian language of Sanskrit and roughly translates to "circle" or "center" - for instance the universe is a circle of planets around the sun or a flower has a center bud or stamen around which the petals form a circle.

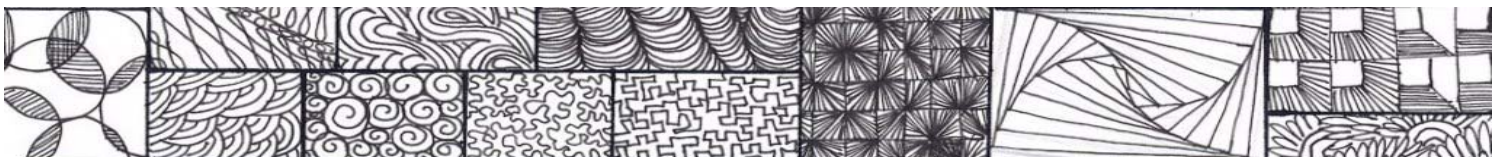
What is "zen" and can Christians use the word? The literal translation for "Zen" is similar to our English word for 'meditation'. (Origins are Indian, Chinese and Japanese.) Many people associate the word Zen as being a Buddhist religion. This is not true. Even those who practice Buddhism don't consider Zen a religion or part of their religion - they think of their Zen meditation as a way to enhance their spirituality. In recent years the word "zen" is being used in America and the new mainstream use of the word is no longer exclusively associated with Buddhism or meditation. The Americanized meaning is closer to meaning: to be relaxed or having a sense of calmness.

So how can Zen enhance my Christianity and my relationship with God? We are instructed in Psalms to hide the Lord's word in our heart and meditate on it day and night. Think of it this way - think of enjoying a cup of herbal tea with a squeeze of lemon added for flavor. Christianity is the cup of tea but having a zen-attitude is the squeeze of lemon that adds a little extra focus and attention on our beliefs as a Christian and our faith in God. Or another way - "Reading the Bible without meditating on it is like trying to eat without swallowing."

For me, the idea of zen and meditation and spirituality and godliness are intermingled. They can each mean different things at different times in my life, depending on what my current focus is. And by coupling those meditative thoughts with doodling, I'm able to focus more fully without outside distraction. Doodling can have different purposes depending on the day ... here are some:

- ❖ Letting God and his teachings be the center of my thoughts in this moment
- ❖ Being present in the "here and now" to be able to put aside the worries of the future or past
- ❖ Seeking peace, clarity and calmness
- ❖ Allowing my mind to relax and push away the stresses of the day

But doodling doesn't always have to be about focusing our attention in a specific way or about meditating on the Word of God. Doodling is all about FUN! Taking the time to be creative and relax with some form of artwork is a great way to pass the time. **Just play!**



Benefits and Uses of Zentangle

Zentangle is actually the name of a company who trademarked the term. It's the same as any other form of doodling we'll learn about in this class. They sell kits for learning their version of doodling, but they also have past newsletters available on their website which includes tiny tutorials of different designs you can learn. You can visit their website at www.zentangle.com.

On their website they have a list of "benefits and uses" - this list shows the wide array of ways that doodling can be used and have a profound affect on our lives. *Doodling with a Purpose* is being used by medical professionals in therapeutic ways with patients as well as company managers to help build employee morale. It's fascinating to learn what others are doing with their doodling.

- ❖ Relaxation
- ❖ Journaling
- ❖ Insomnia (*Improved sleep by creating a Zentangle before bedtime*)
- ❖ Self-esteem
- ❖ Inspiration
- ❖ Panic attacks (*For fear of flying, creating a Zentangle during takeoff and landing*)
- ❖ Modify behavior
- ❖ Create beautiful works of art
- ❖ Nurture and develop creative abilities
- ❖ Relieve stress
- ❖ Improve eye/hand coordination
- ❖ Develop/rehabilitate fine motor skills
- ❖ Team building and group focus
- ❖ Therapy
- ❖ Anger management
- ❖ Addiction therapy tool
- ❖ Early artist development and appreciation
- ❖ Increase attention span and ability to concentrate
- ❖ Home schooling
- ❖ Design inspiration
- ❖ Stretching and warm-up for artists
- ❖ Stress reduction

Bible Verses • Quotes • Sayings

- ❖ Most folks are about as happy as they make up their minds to be. ~Abraham Lincoln
- ❖ If you can imagine it, you can achieve it. If you can dream it, you can become it. ~William Arthur Ward
- ❖ All things are possible to one who believes. Mark 9:23
- ❖ There are only two ways to live your life. One is as though nothing is a miracle. The other is as though everything is a miracle. ~ Albert Einstein
- ❖ Act as if you were already happy and that will tend to make you happy. ~Dale Carnegie
- ❖ Nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiasm. ~Ralph Waldo Emerson
- ❖ The time is always right to do what is right. ~Martin Luther King Jr.
- ❖ Go confidently in the direction of his dreams, and endeavor to live the life you have imagined. ~Henry David Thoreau
- ❖ Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee. Psalms 119:11
- ❖ I will meditate in thy precepts, and have respect unto thy ways. Psalms 119:15
- ❖ I will delight myself in thy statutes: I will not forget thy word. Psalms 119:16
- ❖ Whatever you can do, or dream you can, begin it. ~Johann Wolfgang Von Goethe
- ❖ Even if you're on the right track you'll get run over if you just sit there. ~Will Rogers
- ❖ Do, or do not. There is no 'try.' ~Jedi Master Yoda.
- ❖ The journey of a thousand miles begins with one step. ~LAO-TZU
- ❖ Those who bring sunshine to the lives of others cannot keep it from themselves.~ James M. Barrie
- ❖ In Christian service the branches that bear the most fruit hang the lowest. ~Anonymous
- ❖ Happy is the one who walks so close to God that he leaves no room for the devil to slip between.
- ❖ If you are a Christian, you can expect folks to criticize, but you ought to live so nobody will believe them. ~Anonymous
- ❖ Death is not extinguishing the light from the Christian; it is putting out the lamp because the dawn has come. ~Anonymous
- ❖ Reading the Bible without meditating on it is like trying to eat without swallowing. ~Anonymous
- ❖ Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things. Phil 4:8
- ❖ And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart. Deu 6:6
- ❖ I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly. John 10:10
- ❖ For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. John 3:16
- ❖ But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. Matthew 6:33

- ❖ For the LORD God is a sun and shield: the LORD will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly. Psalms 84:11
- ❖ I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well. Psalm 139:14
- ❖ Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God. 1 John 3:1
- ❖ Preach the Gospel, if necessary, use words!
- ❖ Your talent is Gods gift to you. What you do with it is your gift back to God ~Leo Buscaglia
- ❖ Be still and know that I am God. Psalms. 46:10
- ❖ I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me Philippians 4:13
- ❖ May the Lord bless you and keep you and make His face to shine upon you, and give you peace. Numbers 7:24-26
- ❖ And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength Mark 12:30-31
- ❖ May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight, O LORD, my Rock and my Redeemer. Psalms 19:14
- ❖ Our God is an Awesome God, He Reigns from heaven above, With wisdom, pow'r and love, Our God is an Awesome God ~Michael W. Smith
- ❖ Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine.
- ❖ Count your blessings, name them one by one.
- ❖ What a friend we have in Jesus, all our sins and griefs to bear. What a privilege to carry everything to God in prayer.
- ❖ His fingerprints are everywhere. I just slowed down to stop and stare. Opened my eyes and man I swear, I saw God today. ~George Strait
- ❖ Jesus, take the wheel. Take it from my hands. 'Cause I can't do this on my own. I'm letting go, so give me one more chance. Save me from this road I'm on. Jesus, take the wheel. ~Carrie Underwood
- ❖ We all got a little superman, ready to take a flight, and save a life. Take a look around and you'll see. Ordinary angels. ~Craig Morgan
- ❖ I hope you still feel small when you stand beside the ocean. Whenever one door closes, I hope one more opens. Promise me that you'll give fate a fighting chance. And when you get the choice to sit it out or dance. I hope you dance. ~Lee Ann Womack
- ❖ I raise my hands, bow my head. I'm finding more and more truth in the words written in red. They tell me that there's more to life than just what I can see. Oh, I believe. ~Brooks and Dunn