

INSTRUCTION AND TECHNIQUES – SCRIPTURE MEMORIZATION

Memorizing Scripture is a life-giving spiritual discipline that often gets overlooked. Memorizing can be difficult and boring, and it might seem like a waste of time when you can just pull up the Bible on your phone. Yet the Bible actually commands us to memorize Scripture, and there are numerous benefits!

Scripture memorization develops our minds and our spirits. Through spending time closely meditating on the words of the Bible, we are shaped and transformed by God’s Living Word. Our minds are renewed, and we are prepared to grow in intimacy with God and others, Christ-like character, and empowerment for mission. When seen this way, memorization is anything but boring!

Before You Begin

- *Pray.* Memorizing is not just a cognitive activity; it is also a spiritual one. Ask God to give you success in retaining the text and allowing your life to be transformed by it.
- *Select a translation.* Choose a translation that is easy to understand and maintains the integrity of the text. Don’t select a translation that is heavily paraphrased or uses difficult language.
- *Select a passage.* Decide which verse, section, chapter, or book to memorize. Memorizing sections of multiple verses is preferred to preserve the context.
- *Create a schedule and set goals.* Make a plan and stick to it. Try to memorize every day or every other day. Break passages into manageable chunks and set a timeline for when you will complete each section. Goals help you stay organized and boost motivation.
- *Apply the mind & heart.* Don’t just regurgitate the words; think about what the passage means and how it relates to your life. We retain information better when it means something to us.
- *Identify a supporter.* Having someone memorize with you or check in on your progress can help keep you accountable. Share with a partner and encourage each other through the process.

Techniques and Tips (Mix it up! Variety stretches the brain and enforces learning!)

- *Read it aloud.* Research shows that reading something out loud fosters better retention than merely reading something silently or listening to another person read it.
- *Listen to it.* Many Bible apps offer an audio feature, or you can record yourself reading the passage. Listening to the recording while driving or doing mindless tasks can reinforce learning.
- *Post it.* Posting the passage in places you see often reminds you to memorize in the moment. Hang a notecard or print-out on your mirror, above your sink, on your elliptical, inside your car visor, or even in the shower (covered in plastic of course!).
- *Make it a game.* Write the passage on a white board and recite it aloud. Progressively erase a few words and continue reciting it until you can recite it entirely from memory. Try writing out the first letter of each word in the passage and reciting it by looking only at the initial letters.
- *Use apps.* The Bible Memory App or Verse Locker are great tools for memorization. They can be used anywhere, anytime, and offer a variety of systems to help you learn and review.
- *Use mnemonic devices.* Acronyms, rhymes, associations, and visuals are all key tools you can use to memorize. Determine if there is anything unique about the passage that your brain can latch onto. Try visualizing the text or coming up with associations that can trigger your memory.
- *Repeat, repeat, repeat.* Simple techniques like repeating the text over and over again and covering the page with an index card while reciting can promote rote memorization.

Review is necessary for any long-term success. The key is to review *often* and *consistently*. Review what you’ve learned at the end of each session, and then review the same thing at the beginning of the next session before moving on to something else. Every session should include learning something new and reviewing what you’ve already learned.