

Spiritual Trainer Series

*Memorizing
Scripture*

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Memorizing Scripture

I have hidden Your Word in my heart...
(Psalm 119:11)

Getting Started on Scripture Memorization

Pastor Rick's thoughts on the subject:

"Your capacity to remember is a God-given gift. You may think you have a poor memory, but the truth is, you have millions of ideas, truths, facts, and figures memorized. You remember what is important to you. If God's Word is important, you will take the time to remember it."

- Rick Warren, *The Purpose Driven Life*

❖ How do you feel about Scripture memorization?
Are you...

- Fairly new at it?
- Afraid of failing if you attempt it?
- Overwhelmed by it?
- Passionate about it?
- Other feelings?

Worth remembering:

When Bible verses become a part of me, I'm less likely to come apart!

❖ What do you think this means?

Why Should I Memorize Scripture and Store It in My Heart?

1. **Jesus Christ modeled it for you.** Jesus repeatedly quoted Scripture. For example, when Satan tempted Him to sin, Jesus defeated the temptations by reciting Scripture.

*But Jesus told him [Satan], “No! The Scriptures say,
‘People need more than bread for their life;
they must feed on every word of God.’”*
(Matthew 4:4 NLT)

 Read Jesus’ other two responses to Satan in Matthew 4:7, 10.

2. **It teaches you to think with the mind of Christ.** When God’s Word is in your mind, it will cause you to think and respond as Christ would.

*Don’t copy the behavior and customs of this world,
but let God transform you into a new person by
changing the way you think.*
(Romans 12:2 NLT)

- ❖ Why do you think people like to rely on their own thought processes, when God is so willing to transform the way they think?
3. **It helps you overcome temptation and sin.** And, it is the best help available because it is the inspired Word of God!

*I have hidden your word in my heart
that I might not sin against you.*
(Psalm 119:11)

- 4. It equips you to offer solid biblical advice to others.** The Holy Spirit will bring to your mind verses that will meet a person's particular needs (spiritual, emotional, physical, and relational).

*The teaching of a wise person gives life.
It is like a fountain that can save people from death.*
(Proverbs 13:14 NCV)

- ❖ How do you feel when you give advice that is based on what the Bible says, rather than worldly advice that is based on your own personal opinion?

- 5. It creates in you a greater ease in sharing your faith.** By knowing verses "by heart" that present God's plan of salvation, you can more comfortably share your faith in Jesus Christ with non-believers.

*Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone
who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you
have. But do this with gentleness and respect...*
(1 Peter 3:15)

- ❖ What reason above for memorizing Scripture is most important to you?

How Do I Memorize Scripture?

- 1. Read the Verse in Its Context.** Select one of your favorite verses and read it in the context of several passages before and several passages after it to gain a clearer understanding of what the verse actually means. Read any editor's notes; this will usually help clarify the meaning. Reading the verse in other Bible translations (i.e., NLT-New Living Translation, NASB-New American Standard Bible) or paraphrases (The Message, Living Bible) will also help you get a better understanding of its significance. Above all, pray for insight from the Holy Spirit!
- 2. Read it Aloud.** Read the entire verse slowly aloud several times (to engage your sense of hearing). This will help you block out distractions and focus your attention.
- 3. Memorize it Phrase-by-Phrase.** Use the Phrase-by-Phrase method described below, asking God to reveal more about its applicability to you.

Phrase-By-Phrase Method

(as it applies to Mark 12:30, which is easily broken down into five phrases)

**Love the Lord your God
with all your heart
and with all your soul
and with all your mind
and with all your strength.**

Say the reference: **Mark 12:30**

Say the first phrase: **Love the Lord your God**

(Add phrases one-by-one, repeating this process.)

4. **Write it.** It is also a good idea to write the verse on a note card (sense of touch). Then, you can put it in your pocket, purse, or dashboard – or on your desk or bathroom mirror – and refer to it (sense of sight).

❖ Where's the best place for you to put a few note cards?

5. **Review it.** Review the verse as often as possible during the first few days and continue to review it several times a day for two months. (Some people have said that they prefer to make an audiotape of themselves reading the verses to help them review.) Dawson Trotman, founder of The Navigators' ministry, believes that anyone who reviews a memorized verse daily for seven weeks will never forget it. He emphasizes these three principles of memorizing:

REVIEW!

REVIEW!

REVIEW!

Extra Hint: How to Make the Most of Your Time

Memorizing and meditating on Bible verses makes better use of your time:

- ✓ driving to work
- ✓ waiting in a long line at the grocery store
- ✓ working out on stationary exercise equipment
- ✓ shaving or putting on makeup
- ✓ traveling on a plane, train, or bus
- ✓ sitting in a doctor or dentist's waiting room
- ✓ doing household chores or lawn work

- ❖ Answer Dr. Sala's question in bold after reading this quote:

“Could I ask you, friend, if you through some strange quirk of fate should have every Bible taken from your home, how much of this priceless old Book would you retain in your heart?...Even though I hold a

Ph.D. in Biblical Text, I asked myself, 'If I didn't see a Bible for the next five years, how much have I really buried six inches below the collarbone on the left-hand side?' That sober experience made me realize that the only real Word which can never be taken from us is that which is committed to memory and translated into our lives.”

- Dr. Harold Sala

Other Things to Consider About Scripture Memorization

1. **Make a commitment about how many verses you will memorize and how often:** One per week? Two per month? This will keep your goal specific and measurable.

2. **Pray about inviting a friend or family member to memorize verses with you or, at minimum, hold you accountable.** Why?
 - For mutual encouragement
 - To discuss difficulties in memorizing, as well as strategies for success
 - To share how the Lord is using the memorized verses in your lives

- ❖ Have you ever had an accountability partner before? Why or why not?

- 3. Memorize verses for a specific purpose** (i.e., to evangelize, to meet a personal need, to encourage those in ministry, to seek God's will for your life about missions, to worship God). Purpose-driven memorization will help you stay focused!

For example, you may want to start your memorization journey for the purpose of leading someone you love to Christ. If so, here are some key verses you would want to memorize to help you be a better witness to a non-believer: Romans 3:23 and 6:23; John 3:3 and 14:6; Romans 10:9-10; and Revelation 3:20.

- ❖ For what specific purpose(s) do you need to memorize some verses?

- 4. Put the verse into practice.** You've heard the phrase based on James 1:22-25, "Be doers of the Word." Well, that means that you are to practice what you are memorizing! For example, practice forgiving your brother seventy-seven times (Matthew 18:22); encouraging someone (Hebrews 3:13); not seeking your own honor (Proverbs 25: 27); loving one another (John 13:34). Just imagine the incredible difference practicing will make in your life.

A Great Disciple Who Practiced What He Memorized: The story is told of a new Christian who walked many miles to visit the missionary who had introduced him to Jesus as his Savior. The young believer said, "I have been memorizing some Bible verses, and I want to say them for you." He then quoted Jesus' Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7). The missionary was thrilled, but cautioned him that he must not only say the Bible verses, but also *put them into practice*.

The young man said, "I know! I tried to simply memorize them, but I couldn't do it. So, I decided to learn each verse as best as I could and then practice what the verse said to do. Then, I had no trouble remembering the verse!"

Jesus said, *“Now that you know these things,
you will be blessed if you do them.”*
(John 13:17)

A Truth to Ponder:

Bible verses are meant not merely to inform you,
but to transform you!

Call to Action

Prayer: Invite the Holy Spirit to guide you into His memorization goal for you. Ask Him specifically to give you His strength, power, and wisdom to apply the memorized verses to your life and change you into the image of Christ.

Circle one or two of the Action Steps below that you will take:

1. Today, memorize one verse, such as Mark 12:30, which has been used as an example in this lesson.
2. In the next few days, write several of your favorite verses on 3 x 5 note cards or purchase some Scripture Memorization cards from a Christian bookstore.
3. This week, ask _____ (name) to be your memorization partner.
4. This month, memorize and review _____ (# of) verse(s) per _____ (day, week, month).
5. In a moment, read the “Spiritual Trainer Challenge” on page 10 to see if the Holy Spirit is prompting you to disciple someone on this topic of Scripture Memorization.

Great Resource

The Navigators' *Scripture Memory Course: Topical Memory System*, 1981, SPCN: 9-90073-369-X.

This comprehensive and easy-to-use system allows you to memorize Scripture by key topics (i.e., temptation, salvation, etc.). It works well because most people think and recall by topics.

Help me deposit Bible verses in my memory bank, and I'll draw interest for life.

Spiritual Trainer Challenge

Is the Holy Spirit encouraging you to be a Spiritual Trainer to another Christian in the area of Scripture Memorization? Is someone in your family, small group, or ministry ready to take the next step in his or her spiritual walk? Would you like to share this booklet with a parent, child, sibling, friend, neighbor, or co-worker? If so, here are simple steps you can take:

Things You Can Do to Prayerfully Prepare for a Spiritual Training Appointment

1. Pick up a copy of *Life Training: Spiritual Habits* and read through it. This booklet will give you a good understanding of why it is important to develop spiritual habits like time alone with God, confession and repentance, prayer, Scripture memorization, worship, contentment, praying the names of God, etc. It will also give you some excellent advice on how to be a great trainer/discipler.
2. Ask someone if he/she (same-sex as yourself, unless it is a family member or your fiancé) would like you to disciple him/her using this *Memorizing Scripture* booklet. Pick up a copy for that person. Set a date and time for a one-hour meeting—with a reminder to bring a Bible.
3. Re-read this booklet, *Memorizing Scripture*, paying special attention to how it is organized and what sections helped you the most.

Things to Do During the Appointment

Important Note: This lesson has five sections, each of which will take approximately seven minutes. So, you will need approximately 35 minutes to cover the content of the lesson.

Please allow 50-60 minutes for the entire discipleship session, including fellowship and prayer requests.

1. Open with a brief prayer and a few minutes of fellowship.
2. Read through the booklet with your trainee, taking turns sharing the reading. Ask your trainee the questions as you move through the material. Take your time; don't rush.
3. For the “Call to Action” section, slow the pace as you pray, answer any questions, and discuss the action steps.

Notes:

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Thank you for using the Saddleback Church Spiritual Trainer Series materials entitled *Memorizing Scripture*. We hope that this has been a beneficial experience and has provided you with an opportunity to draw closer to God.

If you are interested in exploring more of the Saddleback Spiritual Trainer Series tools, please call the Maturity Team at Saddleback Church, (949) 609-8201.
www.saddleback.com/maturity