

# SCRIPTURE MEMORY

## THE WHY AND HOW OF SCRIPTURE MEMORY

Source Texts: Acts 7:1-60, 2 Timothy 3:16-17, Colossians 3:16, Psalm 119:9-11, Romans 12:1-2, James 1:2-4, Hebrews 4:12-13, Psalm 119:105, Joshua 1:8, Romans 15:4, Matthew 4:1-11

### WHY SHOULD WE MEMORIZE SCRIPTURE?

Knowing Scripture begins by fueling our desire to witness as ambassadors for Christ to the world we live in. Trusting that God's Word is "living and active" (Heb. 4:12), we can be confident in our ability to share the gospel.

Our memorization of Scripture isn't for the purpose of having an exact answer to every question. Instead, as we memorize Scripture, we experience growth in our knowledge and clarity of anything in life, God's Word infuses itself into our hearts such that His teaching and commands become a natural part of our daily character and personality. In short, we become more Christlike. Sinclair Ferguson says, "We become a walking Bible in human form, and it begins to flow out of us instinctively, the way a concert pianist's knowledge of the text of the great work that he is playing seems to become just part of him or her, and they seem to play almost by instinct."

Psalm 119 asks, "How can a young man keep his way pure? By guarding it according to your Word." There's an inferred sense here that knowing God, storing it up in our own hearts, and living by it, is the path of righteousness. And God desires we walk closer to that path each day of our lives. Scripture reminds us that knowing His Word is how He accomplishes that in us.

Letting Scripture itself make the argument for us, reminds us that it is simply commanded of us (Col. 3:16), it helps us against sin (Ps. 119:9-11), it transforms how we think (Rom. 12:1-2), it helps us respond to difficulties appropriately (Jas. 1:2-4), it fuels our mindfulness and meditation of His Word (Josh. 1:8), it fills us with hope (Rom. 15:4), and if that can't convince you, then we should simply look to Jesus. Throughout the Gospels, Jesus called to mind Scripture in very specific ways. He simply knew it and used it in ministry and life. Consider Matthew 4:1-11 and the temptation by Satan in the desert. Here, Jesus used Scripture masterfully to combat Satan's lies in each temptation He was confronted by.

### HOW TO MEMORIZE SCRIPTURE?

Consider memorizing Scripture within your community. Whether with your family, small group, discipleship relationships, or Godly friendships, this will provide you with great accountability. Below are a handful of tips sourced from Donald Whitney's book, *Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life*, to help you consider how you can more easily memorize God's Word:

- Rewrite the verse in your own words or phrase. Not because you can improve it, but because it'll help you meditate on it and determine what it's saying.

- Think of an illustration of the text.

"That's like..." from nature, history, news, your own life, you've observed.

The more visual you can make this, the more unforgettable it is.

"What is the kingdom of God like? A grain of mustard seed."

If we can learn to speak visually, it's unforgettable. Tell stories about how it's been lived out.

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- Look for applications of the text. Practical examples will drive memory.
- Pray through the text. This is a method of prayer but also a way of absorbing Scripture. You can remember what you read in the bible. The problem is your method.
- Create an artistic expression of the text. You remember every jingle from every commercial. Consider creating a song based on the text you're reading to help you meditate and remember it.
- Find a link or common thread between all the paragraphs you have read.
- Ask how the text speaks to a current issue. What in this passage speaks to my current crisis?

## GROWTH AND COMMUNITY GROUP MEMORY VERSE FORMAT IDEAS

- **Men vs. Women:** Each week, give 1 point to either group for knowing the memory verse. At the end of the semester, have a prize for the winner. Example: The loser cooks and serves dinner to the winner at your Christmas Party and/or year-end fellowship.
- **Individual Leaderboard:** Keep a leaderboard consistently announcing who is in the top 3 and bottom 3. Consider a prize for those in the Top 3. Example: Each week, those who are in the top 3 do not have to show their knowledge of the memory verse. But use a variety of games, team people up, mix up the teams week to week, and have a prize for whoever ends the year in the top 3.
- **No Game:** Just do this for accountability/fun each week in memorizing Scripture.

## INDIVIDUAL GAME IDEAS

- **Scripture Puzzle:** Take the verse and cut it up into smaller phrases or words. Put them in a ziplock bag and pass out to teams. First person or team to assemble the memory verse(s) in the correct order wins.
- **One Word At A Time:** Start with a blank note card and have each individual on a team write one word, then pass the card to the next participant. This continues until the time is up or the verse is finished. Individuals cannot go back and correct any past words and cannot skip forward to any future words.
- **Random Draw:** Put the verse reference to all verses from past weeks in a hat. Have individuals or teams draw a verse from a hat and recite it to the group. That participant then nominates someone from the other team to go next. This continues until all verses are gone. If you have a big group, consider putting each verse in there 2 or 3 times.
- **Next Word:** As a leader, you recite the verse up to a specific point and stop. The individual or team has to either give you the next word or complete the verse. Can mix in every verse up to that week. Can also use the same verse and stop at different points to give more opportunity for participation.
- **Incorrect Verse:** As the leader, you read the verse but include an incorrect word or phrase. The first time person to raise a hand/buzz in and correct the verse gets the point. Do this for multiple verses.
- **Hidden Agenda:** Write the verse reference for all the weeks on note cards and tape them under chairs before your group arrives. As everyone sits down, tell everyone to check their seats and recite the verse they find. If heavily weighted toward one team or the other, have some pass to the right until the other team has an equal amount of verses to recite.
- **Fill In the Blank:** Either on paper or in a Slides Presentation on the TV/Screen, have each verse with a few blanks input in key spots. Alternate between teams, filling in the blanks. Variation: If one team misses a blank, the other team has the opportunity to steal the point.